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North & West Edition No 621

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from the inspectors**
But county politicians say much of
the criticism is unfounded

HERITAGE »

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still flying high**

Popular attraction still a draw
despite uncertainty over airport

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Is housing explosion really helping to build a stronger economy?

It was some years ago that a lady farmer in Essex was telling me about the trials and tribulations of the agricultural industry.

The conversation was light-hearted and I suggested that to make a fast buck or two she might consider selling her land for housing.

I was only joking, but she didn't grasp that. Oh no, she said, she would never do that as she loved the countryside too much. And, in any case, the local council would never let her do such a thing.

She then went on to tell me about another farmer who saw things very differently.

This individual had sold a big chunk of land to a building company that had, of course, gone on to cover the site in houses.

And when that had been completed, the same farmer sold another slab of land and the same process ensued.



Deputy Editor **David Mairs**

The next line I swear I knew was coming. "He was from down your way," she said before naming the part of Kent where this had occurred.

That tale highlighted the very differing attitudes that appear to hold sway in this county compared with other areas of the South East.

A strong push for housing growth is evident among many of our local authorities, whereas other councils in the region show a sometimes fervent desire to protect their natural surroundings.

Their thinking seems to be that a healthy economy goes hand in hand with a healthy environment.

Consider the relative strengths of the local economies within the South East and they would appear to have a point.

But will those who have charge of many of this county's local authorities care to listen?



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Farage: yes, I'm on the South Thanet short-list

by Maria Chiorando

maria.chiorando@archant.co.uk

NIGEL Farage has confirmed he is on the short-list to be Ukip's Thanet South candidate in the general election – and says he thinks he has a good chance of winning the seat.

Writing in *The Independent*, the Ukip leader said: "I have thrown my hat in the ring."

In practice, it would seem there is no chance he will not be chosen, although he insists otherwise, and Thanet South will surely be the most closely-watched election seat in the country.

The other candidates on the short-list have not been named but Farage says they include "a top-class barrister and friend of mine". This is rumoured to be Tunbridge Wells councillor Piers Wauchope.

"It may seem silly that a party leader has to go through the process of being approved and selected, but rank means nothing in Ukip," he wrote.

"Of course I think I stand a good chance of winning. I have fought the seat before and it is in my home county of Kent and an area I have represented in the European Parliament since 1999."



WHO'S LAUGHING NOW? Nigel Farage has confirmed that he is on the Thanet South election short-list

Farage will be up against former Ukip leader Craig Mackinlay, who is standing for the Tories. Labour candidate Will Scobie, Liberal Democrat Russ Timpson and Green Party candidate Ian Driver.

A campaign to stop Farage being elected was launched in Thanet this week before the article in *The Independent* had even appeared.

Thanet Stand Up To Ukip says it is supported by "trade unions, local people, Labour and the Green Party, LGBT and disabled activists".

Campaign coordinator Bunny La Roche said: "Farage is part of the establishment – a hard-right Tory.

"He tries to present himself as the man of the people, and he's not.

"He will only look after the interests of his class – the rich and powerful. I believe he has nothing to offer the people of Thanet except hatred, racism and bigotry."

The group will be asking people to use their vote against Farage.

La Roche added: "We will be holding meetings, producing publi-

cations, and organising protests. We will also be involved in some cultural events."

Thanet South's current Member of Parliament is Conservative Laura Sandys, who is standing down.

Farage told *KoS*: "They have accused me of having nothing to offer but hatred, racism and bigotry.

"They are wrong on all three counts. They are the bigots for trying to stop alternative politics.

"In a democratic nation, that is an abomination."

Appeal for witnesses after 88-year-old is one of sex attacker's victims

POLICE are looking for a man with a tattoo at the base of his thumb after a series of attacks in Whitstable, one involving an 88-year-old.

Three more women were assaulted on Tuesday, taking the number of attacks reported to seven.

Detectives are appealing for witnesses to come forward, as well as any victims who have not done so.

The first of Tuesday's attacks happened at 1.40pm in the alleyway joining Cromwell and Acton Roads.

An 88-year-old woman was approached from behind and touched inappropriately before her attacker tried and failed to take her handbag before running off.

Half an hour later, a similar thing happened to a woman as she was walking down the Crab and Winkle Line towards a supermarket when a man grabbed her inappropriately from behind.

The attacks began on Monday, January 27, when a woman walking along the Crab and Winkle Line was approached her by a man who

touched her over her clothes.

The same evening, a man indecently exposed himself in Grimshill Road and a woman was pushed off her bike in Stream Walk.

Then on Saturday, June 14, a woman was walking along the Crab and Winkle Line when a man walked up to her and punched her in the face.

Detective Inspector Max Davidson said there would be extra police in Whitstable as a result of the incidents.

"At this stage we are not formally linking the attacks," he said.

He urged anyone with information to come forward.

The suspect is described as white, in his 40s, stocky and with a shaved head. He was wearing a grey or dark hooded top and, on one occasion, camouflage-style trousers.

He has a tribal or Celtic-style tattoo around the base of his right thumb.

■ **For an efit, you can visit** www.kentnews.co.uk.

Have your say on who takes charge of garden city plans

PEOPLE can give their opinions on how the Ebbsfleet garden city should be developed in a consultation launched by the government this week.

People are being asked for their views on the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, a partnership between councils and businesses that would spearhead the 15,000-home development.

Issues include the corporation's planning powers and the composition of its board.

To take part, visit www.gov.uk/government/consultations/ebbsfleet-development before Monday, October 6.

In March, Chancellor George Osborne announced that the government would drive forward development at the former quarry site.

Gatwick survey 'made no sense to any normal person'

CAMPAIGNERS have savaged a public consultation into new flight paths to and from Gatwick airport.

Brandon Sewill, chairman of the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign, said: "We feel the consultation has been utterly incomprehensible to any normal person. It has been extremely badly written, using lots of acronyms which have not been

explained, to the point that you have to be an aviation expert to have any chance of responding in a meaningful way."

Tunbridge Wells MP Greg Clark has also complained about the consultation in a letter to the chief executive of the airport.

An airport spokesman said there would be other chances for people to have their say.

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Benefit fraudster conned public out of £8,000

A COUNCIL was cheated out of more than £8,000 by a benefit fraudster who failed to declare property she owned.

Ashford council confirmed it would look to recover the money after Reneta Genova-Tansley admitted three counts of benefit fraud at Canterbury Crown Court.

She was given 120 hours' community service and a 12-month supervision order and ordered to pay £500 costs.

Genova-Tansley, 42, of Crownfield Road, admitted failing to tell the council about property she owned in Bulgaria so she could claim benefits totalling £8,232.92.

Graham Galpin, the council's portfolio holder for finance and resource management, said: "Every penny dishonestly claimed from the council comes directly from the public purse."



GRATEFUL MAN: Jonathan Flanders

Optician saves man's life after head injury

A MARTIAL arts fan had his life saved after a visit to his optician.

Jonathan Flanders was rushed to hospital and told to say his final farewell to his parents after a bleed on his brain was discovered during an examination at Specsavers in Sittingbourne.

He had suffered a blow to the head in his martial arts class and went to see his doctor after developing severe headaches.

"They said it was just concussion, but they recommended an eye test because of my consistently bad migraines in the past," said the 23-year-old.

Optician Hawa Cassim noticed bleeding behind Jonathan's eye and referred him to a specialist clinic, from where he was transferred straight to hospital.

"My parents were told to say goodbye to me as the hospital didn't think I would pull through the operation," he said.

"They had to take a piece of skull out of my head and I spent two weeks in hospital.

"I'm so grateful to Specsavers in Sittingbourne for what they did for me. If it wasn't for them, I wouldn't still be here today."

Cassim said: "We're so happy that Jon has made a full recovery.

"You should always attend routine eye check-ups – there could just be something that has gone otherwise undetected."

Estuary airport would wreck habitat of 140,000 birds, say researchers

by Maria Chiorando

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THE proposal to build a giant airport on the Hoo peninsula would cause significant loss of coastal wetland habitat, according to a report from the British Trust of Ornithology this week.

This would largely be within the Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area but would also adversely affect the Medway Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area.

These areas support more than 140,000 waterbirds and are protected under international law.

Development at these sites would have significant negative impacts on the bird populations that occur there, the report says.

This would be a result not only of habitat loss within the footprint of the airport but also disturbance or habitat change affecting other areas nearby.

If plans to build the airport, often referred to Boris Island because it is a



MARSH RESIDENT: Grey heron

pet project of London Mayor Boris Johnson, went ahead, there would have to be studies to determine the effects it would have on the bird population, the report says.

It has been claimed that the best

option would be to create new habitat for the birds displaced by it.

Estimates suggest that a site of 3,400 hectares would be needed to do this and that the 'new' habitat would need to be in place before building work started.

The demands of such a habitat would make finding a suitable site challenging and add a huge cost to the sum of building the airport.

For the habitat to be as successful as possible, it should not be too far from the lost site, the report says.

Meanwhile, the Thames Hub team, architect Norman Foster's group promoting one scheme, said this week that last month's reports from the Airport Commission saying costs for the development could spiral beyond predictions did not mean the airport should not go ahead.

"The studies did not find any issues that would preclude the development, or undermine the credibility, of an Inner Estuary airport," the group said.

But it conceded that further studies needed to be undertaken.

We're second worst county for dog thefts

DOG-OWNERS in Kent are being advised to be extra-vigilant after the county was named as one of the two worst places in the UK for dog thefts.

Figures obtained by Shooting Times magazine from police forces across England and Wales show 128 dogs were reported stolen in Kent last year.

Only London, with 165, was worse.

The Country Land and Business Association (CLA), which represents rural landowners and businesses, is warning that the animals can often be sold quickly and are not easily traced.

South East director Robin Edwards said: "Dogs are targeted by thieves because they can easily make money selling them on, often for breeding or, most distressingly, for fighting."

The organisation is urging owners to ensure their animal is microchipped and wears a collar and ID tag with full contact details. Microchipping will become compulsory for all dogs in 2016.

Edwards said: "Dog-owners should always be aware of where their animal is."

Could you be the one to save Manston?

THANET council has begun its search for investors interested in buying Manston Airport.

The authority has asked for expressions of interest to determine whether there are suitable partners for the Compulsory Purchase Order it is considering serving on the airport.

The council still hopes to rescue the airport, which closed in May, with the loss of almost 150 jobs. It was reported to have been losing up to £12,000 a day.

An independent report commissioned by the council, published last month, said the airport was likely to need hundreds of millions of pounds and government support to be successful.

But the council has said it will only go ahead with a Compulsory Purchase Order if it can find an investor to cover all its costs so no taxpayers' money is spent. The report said the investor would need a 20-year business plan.

Interested parties have until Wednesday to register.

Ancient clock to tick again at stately home

A 400-year-old clock that has been out of action for a century is keeping time again this week at a stately home in the county.

The turret clock at Godinton House near Ashford, which dates from 1620, has only one hand and a pendulum more than 6ft long.

Before the days of watches, it would have been the only way staff could tell the time as its bell rang out through the estate.

But the clock was swapped for a two-handed timepiece on August 14, 1914, and had been in storage at Canterbury Heritage Museum ever since.

Estate manager Nick Sandford and clockmaker Tony Russell, who has spent more than a year restoring it, set its pendulum swinging again at noon on Thursday. The clock will be on display to the public this weekend.

Russell, who has worked at the estate for more than 50 years, said: "An awful lot of work was needed to get it back into working order."



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A-levels results: more places are now available at our universities

by Sarah Linney

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STUDENTS will have greater access than ever to higher education this September after 30,000 extra university places were made available across the country.

Universities minister Greg Clark, who is the MP for Tunbridge Wells, told Kent on Sunday the number of apprenticeships was also being increased to help young people choose the option that was best for them.

"There has been a cap on numbers in the past to limit the costs of the system, but the consequence of that has been that some people had good enough grades to get to university but there wasn't a place for them," he said.

"Now everyone who is capable of benefiting from university and wants to go should be able.

"We are also expanding the number of apprenticeships. University is not the choice that everyone would want to make and there are

other equally important options. The important thing is that every young person feels that they have a really exciting chance at the age of 18 to embark on courses that are going to open doors for them and help them fulfil their potential."

About half a million students across the country are expected to be starting university this year.

Critics say that is too many but Clark says the benefits of going to university are very clear.

"People who have gone to university tend to be more productive and better paid – which benefits the community as well," he said.

Martin Snowden, pro-vice-chancellor at Greenwich University's Medway campus, agreed.

"There are many benefits to a university education," he said.

"If you look at the statistics around average earnings for graduates and the range of jobs and careers available to them, the advantages are overwhelming."

The national pass rate for A-levels dropped slightly, from 98.1 per cent



to 98 per cent. The proportion of A* and A grades also fell from 26.3 per cent to 26 per cent.

Full results for Kent were not available, but Roger Gough, Kent County Council's cabinet member for education, said early figures indicated the county might buck the national trend.

"It looks as though Kent might be better than the national average,"

Mr Gough said. "The majority of schools seem to be indicating a little bit of an improvement in the overall pass rate."

Mike O'Brien, Medway Council's portfolio holder for children's services, which covers education, said the schools he had visited had also shown an improvement in their results.

"I was on cloud nine, talking to pupils about the different universi-

ties they are going to around the country," he said.

"I am really proud of our young people. A few years ago, education in Medway was in a dark place. But we are climbing out of that now and looking to the future – we have a fantastic educational offer here.

"For anyone who says exams are getting easier, they aren't. They get harder every year."

Of course, even with the extra places, there will be some students who haven't quite got the grades they needed to get into their first-choice university.

The advice from everyone we spoke to was the same: try not to worry as there are still many options open to you.

"The main thing is to not panic," said Canterbury Christ Church spokeswoman Jeanette Earl.

"Get all your information together, all your grades and details, and call the university you were originally confirmed with.

"Talk to the admissions or careers tutor at your school, too."

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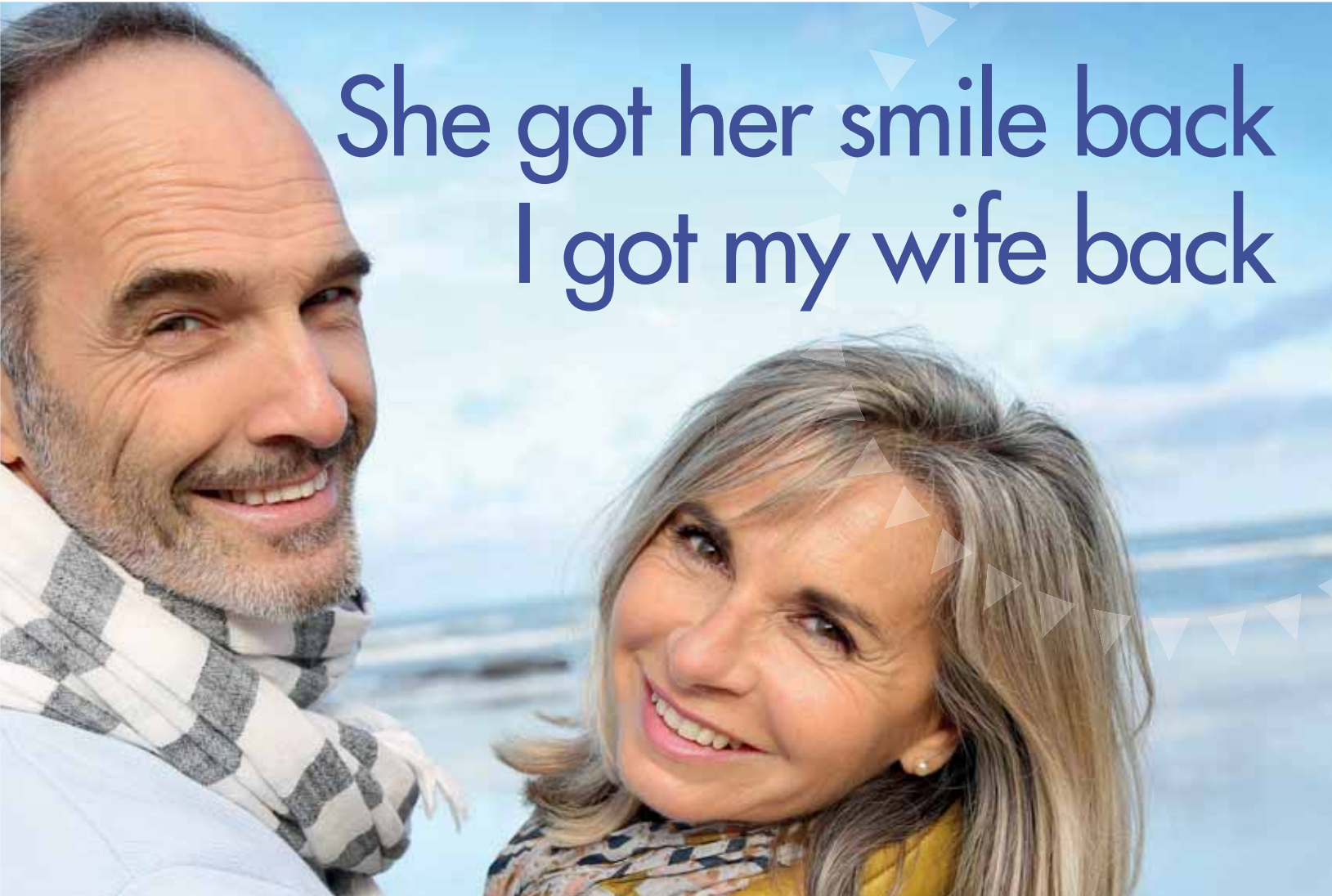


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A photograph of a middle-aged couple smiling at each other on a beach. The man is on the left, wearing a grey and white checkered scarf. The woman is on the right, with grey hair and a yellow top. The background shows a beach and the ocean under a blue sky with some clouds. There are decorative white triangles in the upper right corner.

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At a time when the public sector is making cuts to many front-line services, it might come as a surprise to learn that some of Kent's senior public-sector figures are earning more than the Prime Minister.

A TaxPayers' Alliance report has highlighted the fact that Kent County Council pays 21 of its staff more than £100,000 a year.

And throughout the county, every council chief executive also earns more than £100,000 per year.

And it is not just high-ranking council officials who are on high salaries – police, fire and some hospital chiefs also earn more than the Prime Minister's £142,500 per annum across the county.

The highest earner among Kent's district councils is Abdool Kara, the chief executive of Swale Borough Council.

His annual salary is in the £145,000-£149,999 bracket but, once pension contributions from the authority are added to his remuneration package, the TaxPayers' Alliance says he earns £189,229. The council's website states that he is responsible for 389 members of staff.

Swale Borough Council leader Andrew Bowles thinks that the chief executive is worth his salary.

He said: "It was par for the course at the time he was recruited. We chose to use consultants during the recruitment process and they suggested a suitable salary band.

"We felt it was in line with other similar posts at the time and decided to work with their suggestion.

"If we were recruiting today, we may re-examine salary levels."

But the High Pay Centre – a think-tank that aims to examine the growing disparity between high and low earners – does not believe there should be such a gap between those at the top of the salary scale and those at the bottom.

Luke Hildyard, head of research for the organisation, said: "Pay in the public sector for top executives has increased dramatically, even though front-line workers have seen real-term pay cuts.

"That doesn't represent good value for taxpayers. We've seen a lot of senior local-government executives getting paid six-figure salaries, while there have been chronic inequalities for the lower-paid members of the organisation.

"The public sector should be leading by example on pay and showing the private sector that it isn't necessary to carry on paying these inflated salaries."

And Hildyard doesn't believe that a high level of pay brings a higher drive to succeed, either.

He said: "The academic literature on motivation suggests that once you reach a certain point, ever-higher levels of salary become less important. Instead the motivation comes from status, recognition and the desire to do a good job.

"You could cut most of these salaries in half and they would still be in the top 10 per cent in the country, so why do you need to pay more and more just because the private sector is?"

The top brass at County Hall are also high earners, with 21 earning more than £100,000 between 2012 and 2013 and five taking home more than the Prime Minister each year.

The top earner at KCC was David Cockburn, who, as the corporate director of strategic and corporate



MONEY MATTERS: The county council's Paul Carter and John Simmonds, the High Pay Centre's Luke Hildyard and Taxpayers' Alliance's Jonathon Isaby

Are public-sector bosses being paid too much?

In a time of cutbacks and rising council tax, **Jamie Weir** asks if those running the county's services should really be earning more than the Prime Minister

services, received £189,575 as his salary from KCC.

The figures released by the TaxPayers' Alliance recently say he has had total remuneration of £227,453 once his pension contributions are also taken into account.

He is also the head of paid service at County Hall, a position that means he is the principle KCC officer and responsible for its 33,000 employees.

KCC cabinet member for finance and procurement John Simmonds defended the salaries. He is the man ultimately in charge of the council's £2.15 billion budget each year.

He told KoS that the chiefs at KCC deserved their pay because of the complexity and importance of their jobs.

Cllr Simmonds said: "I remain unapologetic and, really, these people do earn their corn"

"It relates to the size of KCC. We're equivalent to John Lewis in business terms. When you deal with that sort of size, you have to pay market rates.

"We need people with experience, who are used to dealing with big budgets and managing a lot of staff in these positions.

"Bearing in mind the responsibility these people take, you've got to have the very best people and we simply pay the market rate."

And he says benchmarking sala-

ries against the Prime Minister is not realistic.

He said: "The Prime Minister's salary is a bit of an artificial level for comparison. If you take into account the price of rent for 10 Downing Street and add that to the salary as a benefit, it would rise a fair bit."

This is not the first time KCC has been highlighted for its high levels of pay. It was criticised for excessive pay when its former chief executive, Katherine Kerswell, was awarded total remuneration of £589,000 when she left in 2012 after 16 months in the job.

The TaxPayers' Alliance, an organisation set up to campaign against excessive public-sector spending, has been a vocal critic of high

public-sector salaries in the past.

Its chief executive Jonathan Isaby said: "Too many councils in Kent are still paying exorbitant salaries to their senior staff.

"Taxpayers will doubtless remember KCC's Katherine Kerswell pocketing hundreds of thousands of pounds of their money when she walked out of her job after only 16 months, only to bag another six-figure-salary job in Whitehall.

"Residents won't be impressed if councils demand more and more council tax, only to reward a few staff with lavish pay deals."

"It's particularly galling in places where councils are pleading poverty and demanding more and more in council tax.

"Taxpayers expect their council to be filling potholes, not pay packets. Many rank-and-file staff in local councils will be equally appalled – at a time when councils across the country are freezing pay, it appears the money they're saving is being used to line the pockets of town-hall tycoons."

But KCC leader Paul Carter defended his authority's position, saying that the decision to remove the post of chief executive after Kerswell's departure had saved the council money.

He said: "We are one of the largest local authorities in the country. We have managed to save a lot of money by choosing to not have a chief executive. But this means that the directors

we pay have very big jobs that few people are capable of doing.

"Recruitment is also a challenge for these roles. We have to fish in the same pond as other organisations looking to recruit these specialist, highly-skilled workers and if we don't pay the market rate we simply wouldn't get anyone who has the required experience and qualities."

However, Hildyard does think that the private sector should set the tone for public-sector workers.

He said: "The private sector also pays far too much to senior staff and it should be the public sector that is injecting reality into these pay packets.

"It's also worth noting that the success of councils and other public bodies shouldn't be based on the few people at the top of the organisation.

"That's not the reality and everyone contributes to the success or failure of an organisation.

He continued: "We don't think a chief executive should be paid the same as everyone else, but remuneration for senior posts has become out of step with reality now.

"We think citizens' juries should be used to help set pay. That means that, instead of asking a consultant what salary should be given to a chief executive, you ask local taxpayers to give their opinion instead."

“ Residents won't be impressed if councils demand more and more council tax, only to reward a few staff with lavish pay deals ”

Jonathan Isaby,
The TaxPayers' Alliance

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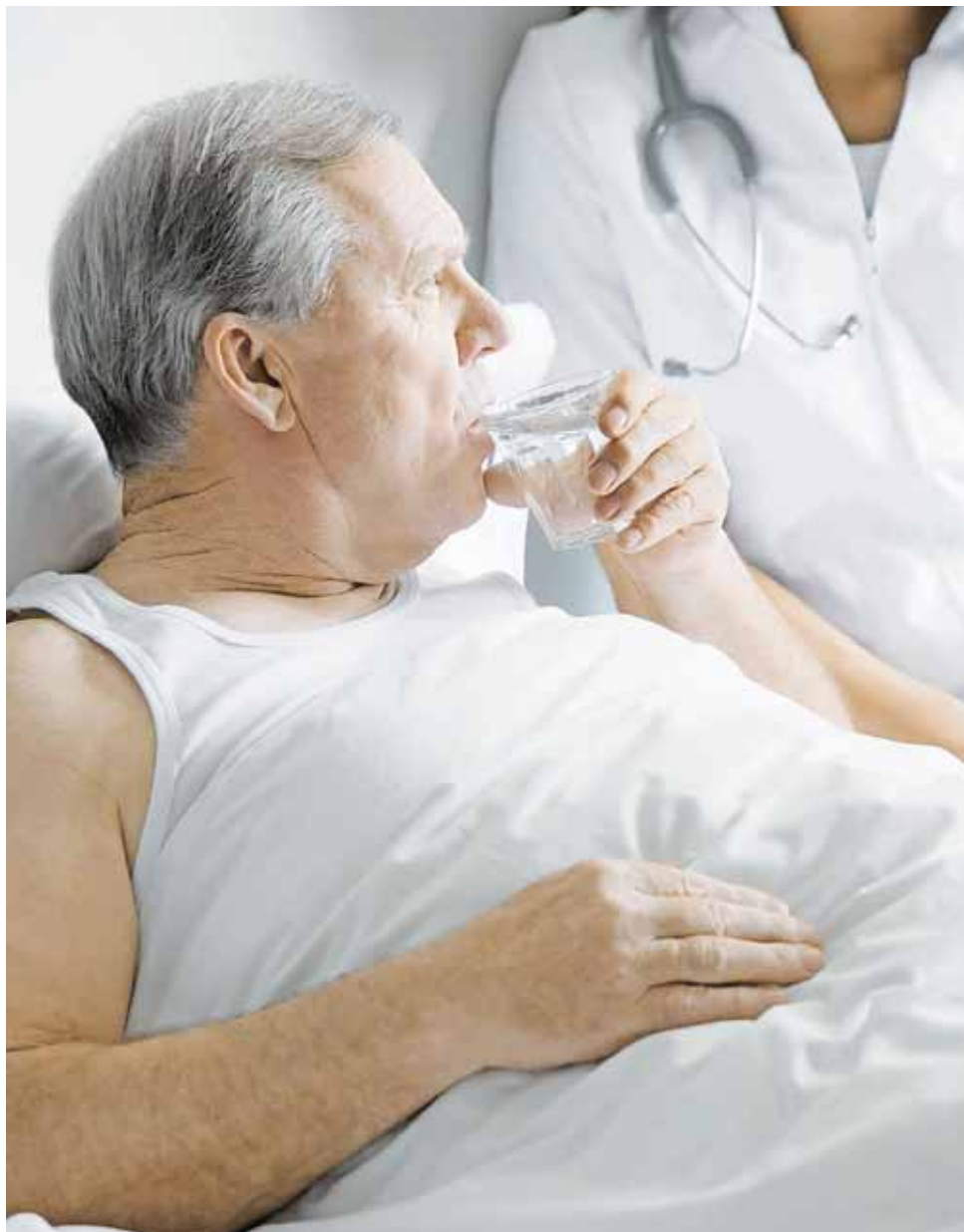
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Hospitals branded as unsatisfactory by inspectors get the backing of MPs

The Care Quality Commission's damning report on the William Harvey, Kent and Canterbury and QEQM hospitals has itself drawn criticism from MPs concerned about the damage the criticism will cause, as [Sarah Linney](#) reports

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NTW

THREE hospitals in the county have been denounced as unsatisfactory and told they need to be placed in special measures in a report this week.

However, the report on the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, the Kent and Canterbury Hospital and the QEQM Hospital in Margate has been condemned as "ridiculous" and "unbalanced" by critics.

The East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust, which runs the three hospitals, was graded as "inadequate" overall in the report by England's chief inspector of hospitals, Professor Sir Mike Richards.

Professor Richards said he had encountered "care failings across the majority of services".

The report follows a Care Quality Commission inspection that praised the hospitals for being caring but rated safety and leadership as inadequate.

"We saw ineffective leadership in action across a number of clinical services and care failings across the majority of services," Professor Richards said.

"Staff were kind and caring, with a compassionate attitude. They were committed to providing high-quality care."

"But we were extremely concerned at the disconnect we identified between the senior team and the staff working on the front line."

Individually, the William Harvey and the Kent and Canterbury Hospital were rated inadequate, but the QEQM escaped with a slightly less censorious rating of "requires improvement".

"A number of clinical services across the trust were poorly led, and there were concerns about staffing levels in a number of areas, especially in A&E, in children's care, and at night," the report said.

"Risks to patients were not always identified, and where they were, were not always acted on by the trust."

"Poorly maintained buildings and equipment were identified in a number of areas."

Inspectors said that bullying and harassment of staff was also a problem within the trust.

"A number of staff came forward to raise serious concerns with CQC about the culture of the trust and the care being delivered," the report added.

"The number of staff who would recommend the trust as a place to work, or be treated, fell significantly below the England average."

However, Thanet North MP Sir Roger Gale said he had been so enraged by the report that he had asked Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt to delay its publication so it could be scrutinised, though he was told this was not possible.

"It's ridiculous. I am incensed by the way the CQC have done this and by the damage it will do to staff morale," he said.

"I don't believe they have done the job in the way it ought to be done and I don't believe the findings of the report reflect the reality on the ground. I think that Professor Richards should be considering his own position."

"I am not an apologist for the trust – I have made, and continue to have, my own criticisms of management actions. The trust is not perfect – there is room for improvement, as there is in every trust in the country."

“It’s ridiculous. I am incensed by the way the CQC have done this and by the damage it will do to staff morale.”



Sir Roger Gale,
North Thanet MP

"But, for example, they have been criticised for using antiquated equipment. Well, the fact that it is old doesn't mean it doesn't work, yet they have had to replace it at a cost that frankly they can't afford."

He said that he had seen and received enough care in the trust's hospitals to know how good they were.

"I have spent a lot of time visiting a patient in the Kent and Canterbury Hospital in the last few months and I believe that by and large it is superlative," Sir Roger said.

"My friend's care was fantastic. They were all over him trying to make him happy and comfortable."

"They have great staff, great doctors and great nurses doing a great job. They don't need men in grey suits coming along and telling them that they ought to be in special measures."

"I feel they have been denigrated unnecessarily."

He said he did not object to hospitals being inspected or criticisms being made – but that they had to be fair.

"I don't want to see bad care for my constituents," said Sir Roger.

"But there has to be a sense of proportion and reality about this. I don't think they have paid enough attention to what is good about the trust."

"I think the inspection has probably been done in haste and it doesn't present a rounded picture."

Canterbury MP Julian Brazier agreed, pointing to the trust's numerous strengths as evidence that the report had given an overly unfavourable impression.

"The unsatisfactory rating and allegations in the report fail to take account of a range of specific, objective facts," he said.

"The trust's standardised mortality rate is one of the lowest in the country and we have a very low rate of hospital-acquired infections."

"Other strengths include excellent critical care across all three sites, including the coronary emergency stenting service for the whole of Kent; excellent stroke services, with good outcomes in terms of patients being able to return home; and state-of-



UNDER FIRE: Criticised by the report were the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford (left), the Kent and Canterbury Hospital in Canterbury (middle) and the QEOM Hospital in Margate (right)

« PAGE 11

-the-art robotic surgery [where robotic systems are used to help with surgical procedures].

He said he was "concerned" at the negative picture the report had painted.

"From time to time, I do get complaints about the hospital but far fewer than most of my Parliamentary colleagues in other parts of the country," Mr Brazier said.

"One of my sons qualified as a doctor last month and his attachment to the Kent and Canterbury was one of the highlights of his training.

"He was very impressed by the quality of the staff and the innovations which lead practice in the country in some areas.

"I am disappointed that the dedicated and professional staff in our hospital should be portrayed in such an unbalanced way."

The trust's chief executive, Stuart Bain, said it was already working to address many of the problems the report had identified.

"We have invested £2.9 million to recruit 69 nurses – 55 of these have been recruited already," he said.

"We have also appointed four additional surgeons and will be recruiting a further three very shortly.

"We identified the need to improve our appointment system some time ago and have just completed a public consultation on our outpatient services that will allow us to make improvements.

"New appointment-booking systems, more flexible appointments and an investment of £28 million in improved facilities, including a new hospital in Dover, will start to address these issues.

"The report does recognise the committed and caring nature of our staff, of which we can be very proud."

The commission, which regulates health and social care in England, classifies hospitals, hospital trusts, departments and aspects of care into four categories: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

The trust also runs the Royal Victoria Hospital in Folkestone and Buck-

land Hospital in Dover, but these were not inspected.

William Harvey

A&E, surgery and children's care were rated inadequate; medical care, maternity and family planning, end-of-life care and outpatient services were said to require improvement; intensive and critical care was rated good.

"Staff were caring and responsive to people's needs, but there were not always enough appropriately skilled staff on duty to make sure people got the care they needed," the report said.

"Children's care needs were not always appropriately met.

"Some outpatient clinics were routinely overbooked, which led to long waiting times, and follow up appointments were often cancelled and rescheduled leading to delays.

"Records of waiting times in A&E did not accurately reflect how long people had waited to be seen."

The trust was told it needed to ensure it had enough staff on duty to care for patients properly and that the

hospital needed to be clean and "fit for purpose", with equipment properly maintained and available when it was needed.

Kent and Canterbury

Surgery was rated inadequate; emergency care, medical care, children's care, end-of-life care and outpatient services were said to require improvement; critical care was rated good.

However, the report added: "Patients on medical wards gave positive feedback about the care that they were receiving."

Inspectors said that staffing levels were a problem again here and also said the hospital needed to appoint a board member with responsibility for children's services.

The inspectors praised the use of patient diaries in the critical care unit to help patients with memory loss.

QEOM

A&E was rated as inadequate; medical care, surgery, maternity and family planning, children's care, end-of-life care and outpatient services were

said to require improvement; critical care was good.

Staff were described as caring, but the hospital was told it did not have enough staff in A&E and that its reliance on temporary staff was putting patients at risk.

"The trust must ensure that safety is made a priority in A&E," the report said.

"Patients must also not be subjected to unnecessary delays for outpatient appointments, either to get an appointment or when waiting in the department. Many patients were experiencing delays in leaving hospital due to delays in their medication being ready, and patients attending pre-assessments before undergoing surgery were experiencing long waits.

"The hospital was poorly led and services for children and young people were not effective.

"Staff told inspectors that they were reluctant to take part in staff surveys because they believed that their response would not be confidential and there would be adverse consequences for making negative comments."

EAST KENT HOSPITALS UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST... ITS REACTION

AN unexplained influx of patients and trouble recruiting nurses have caused problems for the trust – issues it was already addressing before the inspection, its deputy chief executive said.

Chief nurse Julie Pearce said the trust had seen about 100 extra patients a day in its accident and emergency departments over the last few months, as well as a "dramatic" increase in outpatient referrals.

"Our hospitals are extremely busy and they seem busier every day," Mrs Pearce said. "Patients may come to A&E because they feel they haven't been able to be seen elsewhere in the system. Primary care has also got a capacity problem.

"Referrals to outpatients have also grown dramatically, creating pressure on consultants and delays in follow-up appointments, and we acknowledged that this was outstripping the capacity we have.

"We are trying to understand the reasons for this and whether there's an alternative way some of those patients can be seen."

She said the trust had already realised it needed to recruit extra nurses last year and had begun the process before Christmas – but that it was a difficult task due to a national lack of places on nurse-training programmes.

"There is a national shortage of nurses and because of this it takes time to appoint people," Mrs Pearce said.

"We always have vacancies because of our staff turnover, which is in keeping with other

NHS hospitals. It is not about us not committing money. We have been saying for some time to the relevant people, including NHS England, that we would like more training places locally."

She said the equipment that inspectors had said was not "properly maintained" had been earmarked for replacement at the time and had since been replaced; and that the trust rarely received complaints from patients about cleanliness but was taking extra care nonetheless.

"Our clinical outcomes are very good. We have lower-than-average mortality rates, infection rates and surgical complication rates," Mrs Pearce said.

"We have to make 5 per cent savings each year, which is hard, particularly when 70 per cent of our budget goes on staff. We have had more staff than ever working for us in the last three years – 75 per cent of them are clinical staff, 23 per cent are admin and 1.46 per cent are senior managers."

She said the trust was also trying to support staff and avoid damage to morale as a result of the report.

"We are very proud of our staff. They work very hard and care for our patients very well in very difficult circumstances," Mrs Pearce said.

"We don't want them to lose heart. We have tried to give them the message that they should be really proud of what they do and carry on giving the excellent care that they are giving."





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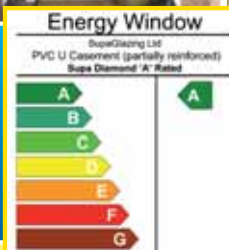
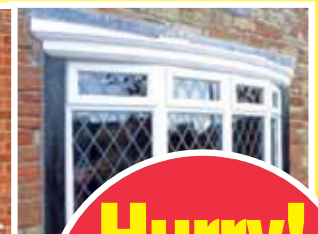
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Still flying high: museum has big plans for future

Despite the continuing uncertainty about its airport home's future, the well-respected Manston-based Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum is very much open to visitors and indeed hoping to expand, as **Maria Chiorando** discovers

THE county's No 1 museum is carrying on regardless despite the seemingly endless Manston Airport saga raging all around it.

The Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum, which opened in June 1981, houses

es two Second World War fighter aircraft, the Spitfire and the lesser-known Hurricane, along with an extensive collection of other memorabilia from the war.

Earlier this year, tourism website Trip Advisor ranked it as the No 1 museum in the

county and the 17th-best overall attraction in the county.

Situated in the airport grounds, it has suffered a drop in visitor numbers as members of the public have wrongly assumed that it had closed, along with the airport, which was closed by owner Ann Gloag in May.

But it is open as usual, with big plans for the future.

Trust member Marcus Russell said: "We have not had any contact at all with anyone from the airport, which is our landlord."

"We have tried to contact the owner, with no response. But we are proceeding as normal – we still have our lease and we pay rent."

"It has been a roller-coaster over the past couple of months and now we are just waiting for the roller-coaster to slow down."

All of the museum's income is generated through donations, purchases from the gift shop and a percentage of the profits from the café.

"We don't charge because we are also a memorial," said Russell.

"Lots of people have had their ashes scattered in the memorial garden and people will come here for somewhere quiet to sit and reflect."

The site is run by a group of almost 60 volunteers, one full-time manager and two part-time staff.

Volunteer Gerry Abrahams, who at 91 years old is the oldest person working at the site, said: "I have always been interested in planes after flying Lancasters in the war, so I decided to come and volunteer here."

"I think the public do wonder whether we might have closed because of what's going on with the airport. We are getting enquiries all the time about it."



Pictures: MATT GOLDSMITH



The planes are the stars of the museum; they have both been perfectly restored and require environmental conditions to be constantly monitored.

Russell said: "The cost of maintaining the planes is high – climate control is an essential part of this and the humidity must also be kept at the right levels."

"This costs about £9,000 a year in gas and electricity bills."

"In addition, insuring the two planes is another £5,000 per year."

"We used to let people sit in the cockpit of the Spitfire for £10."

"Now we can't do that because they are museum pieces and vulnerable."

"These are two of the best-preserved pieces in museums in the country."

The Spitfire is the smaller of the planes and one of the few surviving of its type with a wartime record, having served briefly with 66 Squadron in early 1945, then joining 403 Squadron, shooting down four German aircraft.

It was perfectly restored in the late 1970s by the Medway Aircraft Preservation Society, a not-for-profit organisation based in Rochester that restores and preserves aircraft for public display.

The Hurricane is a much bigger aircraft and also one of few survivors.

This particular plane was born in 1944 and used mainly for bomber defence training before being transferred to RAF Bentley Priory, which is famous for being the headquarters of Fighter Command during the Second World War.

Here it served as a gate guardian

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(on display, symbolically guarding the entrance) for 30 years, until being restored at Rochester in 1985, coming to Manston in 1988.

"Both of these planes are unique, and have very interesting stories," said Russell.

"We are doing something here that no one else is."

The museum has three aims: education, remembrance and reconciliation. Education is very much tied in to reconciliation.

"We had an interesting situation recently when we had a group of German students visit.

"One of the boys, he was about 14 years old, asked why there were four black crosses painted on to the body of the Spitfire.

"It means that it shot down four Luftwaffe planes.

"He didn't know anything about the war – it just wasn't something he had never been taught about.

"And that's why education is so important – we all need to learn about history so we can learn from history.

"Without education, there's no reconciliation. We're not about the glorification of war, that's not our game.

"We are here to tell the story."

Not ones to rest on their laurels, plans are afoot for expansion.

"When the future of the airport is secure, we will try to fund-raise and try to get a longer lease," said Russell. "The Heritage Lottery Fund could potentially give us a large gift of £2 million."



The expansion plans would aim to accommodate a torpedo fighter plane called a Swordfish, which, like the Spitfire and Hurricane, is on offer from the RAF.

"The RAF are very keen on the museum – we recently had a visit from the 41st Squadron. Sixteen members asked to come here and get a tour, which they very much enjoyed."

The trust is immensely grateful for the public support that it has so far received, especially from the local community.

Russell said: "Much of this museum was paid for by local people.

"When the Spitfire was returned after being sent away for repairs in the 70s, they raised £30,000.

"When the MoD decided to sell Bentley Priory, the Hurricane went to be restored and was offered to this museum.

"Local people raised £100,000.

"The café was also opened using the public's money – we have benefited enormously from the goodness of the people of Thanet."

Volunteer Daphne Sharp added: "I've been a volunteer here since 2006 and seen a lot of people come in to the museum.

"It has such a valuable role to play in educating people – everyone has something to learn when they come in here.

"People always say how much they enjoy it and how much they have learnt. It's a brilliant experience."

■ The summer opening hours of the museum are 10am-5pm. The Merlin Café is open daily.

For any enquiries, phone 01843 821940 or email enquiries@spitfiremuseum.org.uk.

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FUTURE TARGET?

The Kent Downs near Canterbury are safe at the moment but the city council has opted to build so many houses in its current plan that in the future it may look to build in this fabulous landscape



What price the countryside as the developers move in?

With councils in much of the region trying to keep their house-building figures low, many in Kent are taking the opposite approach, learns **Jamie Weir**

STAND on the south side of Ashford and the view is astonishing. Housing estates sprawl into the distance, while on neighbouring fields the cement-mixers and diggers are busy preparing the way for the next swathes to fall to the bricks, mortar and tarmac.

It's a similar scene on the edge of Sittingbourne, for example, while residents across much of the county should prepare for a similar onslaught of development if building levels proposed by many of our local authorities come to fruition.

It's easy to say words to the effect of 'Oh, it's happening everywhere'... but is it? Or is Kent taking more than its fair share?

Every local authority has to prepare a local plan that includes, among

other things, how many houses it intends to build and where they should be built.

Although the plans' timescales vary, statistics from the Campaign to Protect Rural England reveal an incredible disparity between house-building targets for Kent and those of neighbouring counties.

The Kent target stands at 138,655, while Surrey has just 28,983 and East and West Sussex 80,256.

Kent already has a higher population density than countries such as The Netherlands, itself regarded as one of Europe's most overcrowded nations. How much more can development can Kent take and what will be the final outcome of a seemingly incessant desire to build?

One local authority that has set a high housing target is Canterbury

City Council and its Conservative leader, John Gilbey, has further bad news for those who enjoy the district's countryside.

"As land becomes tighter and tighter across the county, it will be increasingly difficult to fit houses in," he said.

"In Canterbury's case, I would guess that by the time this local plan has been carried out there won't be anywhere left to build except for the [Kent Downs] Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

"I certainly wouldn't like to be the person trying to find space for houses for the next local plan."

The council came under intense criticism for its proposed development levels and for failing to listen to residents' wishes.

It is in the process of creating its lo-

cal plan, the document that will set out its strategy for development until 2031.

Canterbury council is arguing that it needs to build houses at a rate of 780 each year – that would amount to a total of 15,600 new houses, many of which will be on greenfield (undeveloped) sites.

One of the organisations condemning the council's approach was rural campaign group CPRE Kent. Canterbury district chairman Barrie Gore says the council's approach, with clusters of large-scale development, produces little more than urban sprawl.

He said: "Canterbury needs to think about the rate at which it builds

and whether this is sustainable. Large extensions like the one the council is planning in south Canterbury are simply not appropriate.

"They will damage the environment, create urban sprawl and detract from the character of the city.

"They also take away valuable farmland at a time when the UK's food security is becoming an ever-more important issue.

"This is crucial for not only our county but also our country.

"We need the city council to approach planning in a much more sustainable way, otherwise it risks damaging Canterbury for many, many years to come. The housing numbers are simply excessive."

But the council has rejected the claim that housing numbers are too high, with Cllr Gilbey saying he thought it was the best and most comprehensive plan in the country.

He said: "Just because people don't like it, that doesn't mean it's wrong. The housing figure is based on robust evidence which we believe has given us the correct number."

He also took aim at the government, saying that, although he felt the housing target was appropriate, he did not feel local councils were free to set targets themselves.

He said: "Government says that it doesn't force numbers on councils, but that's not true. The way it speaks about housing need, it shows what the government wants. If we knocked 4,000 houses off the plan's target, it would simply be rejected by the planning inspector so the government can control numbers like that and force councils to build more."



DIFFERING VIEWS: Canterbury City Council leader John Gilbey (top) and Gravesham rural resident James Ferrin

When that suggestion was put to the Government Minister for Communities, Stephen Williams, he refuted it strongly.

He told KoS: "This government has scrapped top-down, undemocratic regional strategies, including the South East Plan, and given local councils the ability to shape where development should and shouldn't go through an up-to-date local plan.

"But there is significant demand across Kent for more homes, and Kent's councils need to work in consultation with local residents to help decide where to build those new homes and how to protect the environment and Kent's countryside."

Despite this, the perception that the government is pushing the drive for house-building remains.

Gravesham is another district council that has recently been working on its local plan.

The chairman of the Gravesham Rural Residents' Group, James Ferrin, says he feels that the government has forced his local council to set a higher housing target.

"In Gravesham we are waiting for concrete figures on the need for housing but are facing the prospect of having to fulfil a numerical requirement handed down by government in terms of housing units," he said.

"These figures don't seem to be based on anything apart from a moistened finger waved in the air."

The chairman of CPRE Kent in Gravesham, Alex Hills, went further, stating he didn't feel the county could take any more houses.

He said: "If the proper definition of sustainability was followed, there would be no more house-building in



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Kent as it is such a water-stressed area with few resources for more people. We don't have enough water as it is already, so it seems pretty stupid to build more houses."

And he does not believe that the proposed house-building in his area is about local need, saying that the council is increasing its target to house those moving to the area from outside.

He said: "Gravesham land is under threat because of a planning inspector saying it must accommodate people from outside the area. This is simply wrong."

And, according to some residents, councils are not even listening to them when they raise concerns.

Clive Church, chairman of the Alliance of Canterbury Residents' Associations (ACRA), which represents 20 residents' groups and thousands of people across the city, said: "Canterbury's local plan consultation with the public was absolutely awful.

"Before the plan was even developed, the council should have spoken with residents and asked what they wanted. Once the first draft had been completed, it should have actually responded to people's concerns.

"Instead, we have seen the council hold a series of highly-structured meetings which essentially made people jump through hoops and then utterly fail to respond to any of the public's concerns in the second draft of the plan.

"It feels as though the decisions were made before they asked any of the public anything."

"This means that we are in a position where we may well end up



HOME TO NEW HOMES: Farthingloe will be the site of new housing; inset, Dover council leader Paul Watkins

with a really bad and damaging local plan in place."

Dover is another area where controversial development proposals have been put forward.

One scheme recently given the go-ahead was for the construction of 521 houses, a hotel and other buildings at Western Heights and Farthingloe on the edge of the town.

The proposal, which was unpopular with many locally, is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

These sites are designated by government to ensure they are protected against development, except in circumstances that are considered to be exceptional.

One of the campaigners who fought against the development proposal is Andrew Richardson.

He said: "With a development like this, you need a really strong case for allowing it in an AONB. I appreciate that as I was a councillor for a number of years and actually sat on Dover's planning committee.

"But in the case of Western Heights and Farthingloe, the developer and council never really showed a strong case – they just seemed to be focused on building. I believe that the reason for that is that the planning committee doesn't have anyone with a planning background.

"That means they don't understand the importance of balance between the environment and regeneration. They are all extremely pro-growth, with little concern for the environment.

"The ruling group seems to think that the only answer to regeneration of the area is to untie development and

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just allow building. What they cannot appreciate is the importance of landscapes like the one at Farthingloe.

"By allowing all of this building, they are slowly removing the reasons which make Dover a special place."

Lara Pimblett, a resident in the area, said that the council had not listened to the people.

She said: "We surveyed people in the town and there were so many people against the development."

"It was as though the council didn't care about the public's views and by the time the planning committee came to meet they had already made up their minds."

"In fact, during that meeting the council spent more time discussing a tree which was going to be felled in someone's back garden than they did talking about this development."

Dover District Council leader Paul Watkins, however, denied that local people had not been listened to.

He said: "Almost all of the major respondents to that consultation were saying that it should happen and we should just get on and give the developer permission."

"The business community, the South East Local Economic Partnership and Kent County Council were all in favour of the development."

"On the other side, there were just a few local people saying they didn't want it."

"Dover has a poor economy at present and we need to ensure that we are providing all of the housing that people need in order to make sure the area is able to grow economically."

Despite house-building frequently



FINITE LAND SUPPLIES: Green councillor Ian Driver and (inset) countryside campaigner Clive Church



cited as a driver of economic growth, many people do not believe that what is happening is sustainable or even likely bring that growth.

Thanet Green Party councillor and parliamentary candidate Ian Driver says there is a finite amount of development that the county can stand before it loses its character and increasingly inappropriate tag as the Garden of England.

One of his concerns is the failure by councils to ensure that brownfield land, previously developed sites, are built on before undeveloped areas of the county.

Cllr Driver said: "The house-building agenda seems to have been taken over by an obsession with economic growth. It's out of sync with the rest of the country and could end up damaging Kent immensely, and that wouldn't even be good for the economic growth everyone is so desperate for."

"There is plenty of brownfield land available for building in Kent, but to create the most profit for developers we are seeing huge greenfield sites being proposed for house-building."

Cllr Driver believes that one of the reasons for the focus on Kent as a house-building capital of England is an imbalance that has been created between this area and others.

He said: "Kent is taking the brunt of housing from elsewhere in the country. There has been a huge imbalance built up between this county and elsewhere in the UK, with the government placing far too much focus on Kent."

"It's stupid as it ends up creating a lopsided country, with loads of development in this county and little where it needs to be elsewhere in the country."

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“One of the reasons for Kent taking a particularly large amount of housing is that we are slowly becoming an extension of London.

“Our county is paying the price for London’s housing market being out of control. Young people can’t buy a property in the capital because prices are so expensive and out of touch with reality and, because of that, they have to move out of the city.

“That has meant that many people are choosing to live in Kent and, because our councils are happy to just keep building, the problem gets perpetuated.”

Cllr Watkins, meanwhile, does not feel there is an issue with the level of building in the county and that, if anything, we are not building enough.

He told KoS: “There is plenty of space to build housing in Kent. We aren’t running out, that’s for sure.

“There has been a recognition across a lot of councils in the county that we must build more as our populations grow.

“That’s crucial to support further growth in the area. Our assumptions are backed up by demographic studies and we can see that we have to provide more and more homes.”

But while councils are choosing to build in Kent, other parts of the South East want to allow far fewer new houses in their local plans.

For example, whereas Canterbury is looking to build 15,600 homes in its plan, Brighton and Hove, an area with five times the population of Canterbury, is only looking to build 11,300.

It is a similar story elsewhere, with many other councils in the South



WILDLIFE: Lodge Hill had been central to Medway Council’s housing plans but has now been designated an SSSI

East opting for lower targets when compared with Kent councils.

One site central to a local plan in Kent is Lodge Hill in Medway.

It has been a core part of Medway Council’s housing plans for many years but was recently designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of its importance for the nightingale.

A local man who campaigned against the site’s development, Rolf Williams, told KoS: “In terms of geography, you can see why so much housing is wanted in Kent.

“It’s strategically located in the south-east corner of the country with good links to both London and Europe. But that doesn’t mean councils should develop as much in Kent, and certainly not at this site.

“Councils like Medway need to think really carefully about over-developing areas like Lodge Hill. That’s because tourism is a huge industry in the county. Who’s likely to want to come here if we cover it with concrete?

“The argument isn’t between birds or people, as it is the nature which brings people here, and it also benefits residents in the area.

“By developing our countryside, we will stop people being able to enjoy nature to relax. In my mind, that is simply cutting off our nose to spite our face. We will just be making Kent a less attractive place for people to live and tourists to visit.

“If we build on a piece of land and it affects one species, it’ll cause a chain reaction that will have a ripple effect and cause other issues.

“Our countryside and the nature within it is such an incredible asset, do we really want to see it built on?”



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Honey's where the money is, so watch out...

Famed for health-boosting properties, honey has never been more in demand. This brings both good and bad news for bee-keepers, reports **Maria Chiorando**.

HONEY has become so popular that theft of hives is developing into a problem across the county as thieves attempt to cultivate their own bee colonies to produce the valuable product.

Norman Rabone owns Blue Bell Hill Apiaries, a family-run commercial bee-keeping operation near Gillingham, producing and selling honey.

He said: "Lots of hives are getting stolen, but they are after the bees more than the honey itself. Certain types of honey are worth so much because of all their health benefits.

"We haven't had any hive-thefts yet – touch wood. We have been taking precautions in terms of where the hives are and we have learnt to keep them secure.

"This has been a very good year in terms of bees, probably because of the mild winter and because of how much blossom there was. Lots of insects have done well.

"On top of the weather, we hope our bees are doing well because of our management. Some of the thefts do appear to have been by professional bee-keepers, which is obvious because of the way they've handled the hives.

"Others have been more random – people will take anything for which there is a price. It's not very Christian, but we always hope the thieves get badly stung!"

But why are so many people turning to this increasingly sought-after foodstuff?

Oliver Mercer is part of a family who own the Holwood Farm shop in Keston, specialising in local and artisan produce.

There, the product is so popular that customers are warned that they should phone ahead to check supply levels before going to buy it.

"Local honey has leapt up in popularity – we have done tastings in store and there has been lots of interest," said Mercer.

"Most people are very interested in the health benefits of it.

"One of the things that may make Kentish honey so good is the variety of produce grown in the county and it's said that the different pollen makes the honey taste different.

"Out of the varieties we sell here, runny honey tends to be a bit more popular than set, which most people use for cooking.

"Customers do want honey that is as local as possible for the hay-fever benefits.

"At this time of year, when hay fever gets bad, I think most people are mainly buying honey for help with their hay fever."

Roy Taylor, who runs the Fawkham Bee Company in Fawkham, agreed.

He said: "It's true that it is very good for you, full of enzymes, and it's all natural.

"Lots of people swear by it for allergies – they have said they've tried everything in the chemist, but honey is the only thing to cure their hay fever."

Mr Rabone Rabone added:

"With local honey, you have local pollen, which helps with hay fever.

"It's that age-old remedy – you take a bit of the poison and it stops the trouble.

"There has been a lot of research done with athletes and recovery, too – the thinking now is that a spoon of honey before bed is very helpful with helping bruising to go down."

So how is honey produced?

There is a wealth of honey production in Kent, some of it for commercial and business purposes, while some has sprung up as an off-shoot from the hobbyists who keep bees.

Cliftonville bee-keeper Alasdair Bruce said: "Bee-keepers are always learning.

"A lot of people, when they start, get really into it. I have got into the science of it, which is fascinating.

"A honey bee, down to the end of their life [about 30-36 days] will go out and forage and look for a source of nectar that is sustainable.

"They take nectar back to the hive and regurgitate it, passing it from bee to bee via their mouths.

"They then put it in the wax cell, where, if it has the correct amount of water in it, it will evaporate.

"When the density is right, it is ready. If water content is too high, they can't regurgitate it properly, the other bees will reject it and they will go back out again to find more nectar.

"It is a highly complicated chain and a science we still know very little about."

Roy Taylor again: "It's not an exact science. In mid-summer, the hives will peak with up to around 60,000 bees, but although we know roughly how many bees are in there, it's difficult to predict exactly how much honey will be produced as there are so many variables."

As with most products, it is usually easy to tell the difference between a smaller-scale artisan product and a more mass-market one.

Rabone said: "With a more artisan product, it is not always going to look and taste exactly the same.


"We are always trying to educate people about that. I'm not saying the supermarkets are selling a bad product – they aren't – but it is very different to small-scale production

"The flavour also depends on where you're making honey.

"We can't control where the bees go. They can fly up to two miles away, gathering different types of pollen, and you don't know where they have collected it from. We don't blend our honey, whereas with commercial blends, they are aiming to make the same product every time, so they will blend it to achieve a particular colour, flavour and consistency.

"With this type of product, you don't know where it is from as the label





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HOW DO HONEY BEE COLONIES OPERATE?

"THERE are three types of bee," says Dr Alasdair Bruce.

"These are the queen, drone and worker bees.

"The queen lives for up to six years and can rule the colony with an iron fist."

It is an eventful six years: a newly-hatched queen will fight to the death with any other queens in the colony.

She secretes a pheromone that renders the other females sterile, but her main duty is then to mate

with the drones and lay eggs.

"If the hive thinks the queen is slowing down in her laying, they can supersede her.

"They will run her out of the hive, but first they persuade her to lay an egg which could become a new queen."

The drones are the only males in the hive. They cannot defend it as they do not have stingers,

while they cannot collect pollen or nectar so can't feed the hive.

"Their only purpose is to mate

with the queen. After doing this, they die," says Dr Bruce.

The worker bees are all female and have many tasks to carry out.

"They tend to the queen, as well as the young drones," he says.

"They do a lot of house-keeping jobs, like keeping the hive tidy, as well as building the comb.

"They go out foraging and defend the colony when it is threatened."



will only state EU or non-EU country of origin.

"The quality of the honey comes from the purity of it."

Dr Bruce agreed: "Different pollens make different-tasting and looking honey, which also has a different fragrance.

"For example, I will harvest a honey which has lots of nectar from blackberry – it will have a very floral element. Honey with a heavy ivy nectar element to it has a very strong, very distinctive, edge.

"You also find that the mass-produced brands are often heated and pasteurised, which is not the case with my honey.

"It never heats up beyond the temperature in the hive."

There are three main types of honey according to Rabone.

"There's runny honey, set honey, and cut-comb. All honeys set, but the difference is in how quickly it sets, which depends on where the pollen is from.

"Pollen that comes from rapeseed makes a honey that sets very quickly, but you never really know how long it will take to set.

"We make a creamed honey, which is a very old bee-keeping term, where honey that's specially selected is creamed to thicken it up.

"We use a paddle, which used to be done by hand but is now all mechanised.

"Cut-comb honey is still in the wax. Honey doesn't go off as it contains a natural antibiotic.

"All honey will set eventually, but if you warm it up, that makes it go runny again."

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choose from the main menu or from the specials.

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Taj Cuisine Walderslade

Why here?

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there will be many specialist traders who will have all of the latest models and accessories on sale. Beginners can even take control of a radio-controlled model for the first time.

The show is being run in association with the Maidstone Model Flying Club and in partnership with RCM&E magazine.

The fun starts at 10am each day. In addition to a full day's flying, a full range of other activities and a showground packed with traders make this a must for anyone with an interest in this fascinating hobby whether a professional or a beginner.

There will be plenty to eat, drink

and buy as well as activities for the less model-minded members of the family, while camping is available for the weekend.

To be in with a chance of winning a pair of tickets, simply answer correctly this question:

■ **At what location is the Southern Model Show taking place?**

- Headcorn Aerodrome
- Heathrow Airport
- Hawkinge Airfield

To enter, simply text KOS followed by MODEL and your answer then your first name, surname address and postcode to 80058, eg KOS MODEL C JOHN SMITH 2 THE

STREET, TOWN, DV2 2GT.

Texts cost 50p plus your standard network rate. Winners will be selected from all correct entries.

The promoter's decision is final. Usual terms and conditions apply for full details, visit www.kentnews.co.uk. Please note if you should enter after the closing deadline of Wednesday, August 27, 2014, your entry will not be valid but you still may be charged. SMS services are provided by BBA Digital Helpline telephone 0844 3572403.

Alternatively, enter by post to Southern Model Show Competition, Archant KOS Media, Kent House, 81

Station Road, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PP, including your name, address, postcode and telephone number.

If you don't win, there's no need to worry – you can still get tickets and they can even be bought in advance at a discounted rate.

Visit www.headcornevents.co.uk for details or phone 0845 652 62 63.

Gates open at 10am and tickets are £12 per adult, £10 per child or £35 for a family ticket (two adults and two children). Weekend camping is available at the site for £60 for any motor-home, caravan or tent and includes entry into the show on both days for two adults and two children.

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FIRING THE IMAGINATION: Boogie Woogie Baby and (below left) A Playground Of Dance and (below right) Bleu!



Family festival sets its sights on inspiring young people

A CROBATICS with shopping trolleys, underwater theatre and 'dad dancing' workshops will all be on offer as part of the bOing! family arts festival in Canterbury at the end of this month.

More than 80 different theatre, music and film activities for children and adults alike will be taking place at the University of Kent's Gulbenkian theatre.

"The ethos behind it is to bring the very best-quality art forms to children and young people," said Gulbenkian spokesman David Yard.

"We're passionate about bringing young people into theatre and the arts – it's often said that

Canterbury's Gulbenkian theatre is hosting a weekend of 80 varied events – including films, dance and acrobatics – at the end of August, aimed at bringing younger audiences into the theatre and the arts. **Rebecca Cooney** finds out more.

young people are the audience of the future, but actually we think they are the audience of the now.

"We should be creating shows that young people can love now, rather than seeing it as preparing them for being a grown-up audience."

Children's films including *Alice In Wonderland* and *How To Train Your Dragon 2* will be showing but, Yard said, it won't just be

about watching, with interactive shows such as *Bleu!*, which uses technology and lighting to immerse the audience in an underwater world.

Families can also learn to perform comedy and decorate *Alice In Wonderland* cupcakes in classes and join in the Mad Hatter's tea party at the Gulbenkian's café.

British theatre company Oily Cart will be premiering their new

show, *The Bounce*, which uses trampolines to explore bouncing and is suitable for all children but aimed at those with autism and learning difficulties.

This will be the second year running that the festival has taken place and the Gulbenkian has secured Arts Council funding to continue running the event for the

Continued on page 31 »

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« Continued from page 29

continue running the event for the next two years.

Gulbenkian director Liz Moran said: "We're hoping to run an even bigger international festival next year.

"We've been made into an Arts Council national portfolio organisation, which means we receive funding but also that we're part of showing off what the country has to offer in terms of arts for children and young people.

"I think if people come on the Saturday, they'll come back on the Sunday. I hope they come away with a sense of some of the passion that the arts can inspire in young people."

66 I hope they come away with a sense of some of the passion that the arts can inspire in young people **99**

Among the artists appearing at the bOing! family arts festival is cellist, actor and opera-singer Matthew Sharp. Turn to page 32 to find out more about him.

■ The bOing! family arts festival is on Saturday and Sunday, August 30-31. Some of the events are ticketed, with a maximum price of £5, but many are free and everyone is invited to enjoy the bOing! atmosphere. You are advised to book in advance for the ticketed events as some have limited availability. Tickets and further information are available online at www.boingfestival.com, or you can phone 01227 769075.



WHAT A SHOW: Artistes include Cracking The Crinoline (top), Lifeboat (above) and Saving The Lyra Birds (right)

Continued on page 42 »

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AIMING HIGH:

Cellist, actor and opera-singer Matthew Sharp is appearing at bOing!

INTERNATIONALLY-acclaimed cellist, actor and opera-singer Matthew Sharp will be presenting an interactive family concert at the bOing! festival.

Sharp has toured all over the world, performed with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and London Philharmonic Orchestra and given solo performances at the Glastonbury and Latitude festivals.

He told KoS what it is that motivates him to take time out to work with young people.

"I like to see it as a whole picture," he said.

"My attitude to working with children and young people is inspired by theatre – there are companies like Knee High, which started out producing work for families in community centres, and now they tour internationally with their shows but they still do work with families in community centres, too.

"It seems a healthy and whole way of working and it keeps me on my toes."

Sharp grew up surrounded by classical music, but he is aware that is not the case for everyone.

"I think it's becoming less and less a part of everyday experience for children, but that's no reason not to do it – that's why it's important to have the opportunity to get up close and personal with it," he said.

"It's not about everyone deciding they want to be a musician, it's about experiencing it as a part of life."

For him, it was about stripping away some of the conventions surrounding classical music.

"There's this idea that it's just for grown-ups and that you have to

How stories told by light of the camp-fire are helping bring classical music to younger audiences

dress a certain way and clap and be quiet at certain times, and that can be quite off-putting," he said.

As both a cellist and a bass-baritone opera-singer, Sharp is unusual in the classical world but said there was no conflict between the two because both were about telling a story – and this was the ethos behind his work for bOing!.

"I really believe that the urge to sit around a camp-fire and tell stories about who we are is a very innate thing," he said.

"If you tell children the stories that are told in classical music and explain what the music's telling them, they're really fascinated.

"These are stories that really hold children's imagination – and, even if you don't understand the language the story's being told in, you can still feel what's going on.

"Once you've taken away those conventions, explained the story and



got everyone on the same page, then you're ready to go."

The show, he says, will be pitched at both children and adults.

"Sometimes you go to events that are very child-focused and the parents are sat at the back feeling alienated, which defeats the purpose.

"It's about sitting round that camp-fire, it's about sharing the experience."

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Visit to Royal will help you decode wartime secrets

THAT Is All You Need To Know, the story of the men and women who cracked the Enigma code, is due to hit the Thanet stage for one night only in October.

The piece, by the Idle Motion theatre company, will be performed in October at Theatre Royal Margate.

A theatre spokesman said: "This play is a celebration of humanity's ability to solve the impossible, to crack the most complex of problems, and of the extraordinary people whose quiet work changed the course of our history."

The play includes physical theatre and video projection to bring to life the chess-players, debutantes and

Oxford graduates who worked at Bletchley Park during the Second World War.

It tells the stories behind the project, from the famous names like Alan Turing, to lesser-known people who worked alongside him, often keeping their part in the war effort a secret for decades.

Idle Motion, whose members met at school, have been touring nationally and internationally for six years.

The performance is on Wednesday, October 1, at 7.30pm.

Tickets cost £14 – concessions and school group prices are available.

For more details, visit www.theatreroyalmargate.com.

The Whispers keeps alive voices from the Great War

VOICES from the past have returned to Folkestone as part of a poignant sound installation made up of fragments from the letters of soldiers in First World War.

The installation, entitled The Whispers, was created in 2008 by French artist Christian Boltanski for the Folkestone Triennial arts festival.

It was placed at the top of The Leas, which thousands of soldiers passed through on their way to France.

Now it has returned after being acquired by Folkestone Artworks and was reinstalled in the same spot in time for last week's ceremony to mark 100 years since the war began.

Alastair Upton, chief executive of the Creative Foundation, which commissioned the piece, said: "I am pleased that the Folkestone Artworks collection is commemorating the 100-year anniversary of the First World War through the acquisition of Christian Boltanski's The Whispers."

"It is a poignant reflection on Folkestone's historical significance as a site for the departure for millions of British soldiers."

The sound piece has been installed in four of the benches at the base of



the new memorial arch, unveiled by Prince Harry last week.

Visitors can look out across the Channel towards France and listen to letters exchanged by a soldier and his fiancée, a letter from a soldier to his parents and another describing a soldier's preparation to travel to war.

Stephen Deuchar, director of the Art Fund, which, along with the Roger De Haan Charitable Trust,

donated money to buy the piece, said: "This very moving work by a highly-acclaimed European artist will greatly enhance Folkestone Artworks' growing collection."

"We are delighted to have lent our support to this important acquisition."

The Folkestone Artworks collection is made up of 17 pieces, including pieces by Tracey Emin and Mark Wallinger, all designed for the Folkestone Triennial.

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THE Kentish Cobnut Association has been left reeling by the scale of this year's crop. And not only is it enormous, it is three weeks early as well.

"The mild winter has meant that all harvests have come in early this year," said Alexander Hunt, chairman of the Kentish Cobnuts Association.

"And the crop is about twice the size it is normally."

The lesser-known cobnut can lay claim to being a largely Kentish product – mainly grown in the South East, due to the mild weather conditions.

"It is also historical," said Hunt. "It was traditionally grown here probably due to access to labour and access to the London market."

Also known as the Kentish cobnut, after being introduced to these shores many centuries ago, it is a cousin of the hazelnut and it grows on trees.

"Very simply," said Hunt, "it is a cultivated hazelnut – it is a variety of hazelnut in the same way a Bramley or Cox is a variety of apple."

"It is the only nut in the world that is completely fresh."

Karin Craddock, a member of the association, added: "It is like a fresh pea. It is a unique product and people do get rather addicted to it."

"I think of the cobnut as nature's sweets as it comes in its own shell."

"You crack it open and it is completely natural, fresh and sweet."

"You can only eat it fresh for about a month each year, then it is dried. The crop is usually harvested around August 20, but this year we were picking them on August 1."

Versatile, delicious and home-grown!

This year has seen a bumper cobnut harvest and, as **Maria Chiorando** reports, that's good news for foodies

“It is a cultivated hazelnut... it is the only nut in the world that is completely fresh. It is like a fresh pea.”

Cobnuts are exceptionally versatile.

"They can be used in many ways," said Hunt.

"They can be eaten straight from the shell, used on pizza, in salads, even as a canapé."

"They have a real cachet as they are such a local, artisanal product."

"They are very popular with celebrity chefs and in hotels in London."

"This is because they are succulent, very juicy and they are very special

when they are freshly picked."

The nuts dry out naturally after about eight weeks and then can be used in other products such as chocolate.

Once dried, they retain their versatility.

"You can substitute them in any recipe that

calls for hazelnuts," said Hunt.

There are also health benefits to

these nuts, which contain a glut of vitamins including E and B6 and thiamine.

They are rich in protein and the fat is unsaturated.

As word of the cobnut spreads, it is hoped that this product will find its way into more people's diets.

"They are currently, in supermarket terms, a minority crop," said Hunt.

"But the product is gathering momentum."

"We are also working hard to raise its profile."

"They are the only really native English nut, with such a rich history," Ms Craddock added.

"They have long been eaten here – there are even historical records of the shells being found in Shakespeare's Globe theatre."

"I would recommend that everyone gives them a try."

You can visit www.kentishcobnutsassociation.org.uk for more information.



The flour that has the sweet scent of success

AS if the Kent world of farming and produce hadn't got enough to celebrate, flour from the west of the county has now been awarded a coveted Great Taste Award.

Eckley Farm in Tonbridge is arable, with wheat being the primary crop, though the land is also used to grow oilseed rape, field beans, peas, oats and linseeds.

Farmer Claire Eckley said: "Our Pure Kent Strong Wholemeal Flour is milled on the farm from our own wheat. We plant it, grow it, harvest it and mill it.

"We are able to supply bakers with a fresher product, which gives their loaves a more authentic flavour.

"We were delighted the flour was Highly Commended in the Taste of Kent Awards earlier this year and over the moon to get not just one but two stars in the Great Taste Awards.

"The judges said it made a perfect loaf with a fresh earthy flavour."

The Great Taste Awards comprise the world's largest blind-tasting food tribute.

They are judged by more than 400 of the most demanding palates belonging to food critics, chefs, cooks, members of the Women's Institute, farmers and a host of food writers and journalists.

They are considered one of the most respected food-accreditation schemes for artisan and speciality food producers.

Judges are presented with a sample of the product – and they taste, confer and re-taste before making the decision on whether a product should be a one-, two- or three-star winner.

In total, more than 12 judges will have tasted and commented on each product.

Winners of the award can put the logo on their food packaging.

Following the award, the Eckleys are still hard at work preparing their next product.

"At this time of year, finishing the harvest and getting next year's crops into the ground is our top priority.

"But we are looking forward to developing more flours, including strong white.

"We'll be out and about at farmers' markets in Kent, selling flour and also our cold-pressed rapeseed oil, made from our own rapeseed, grown on the Leeds Castle estate," said Ms Eckley.

In addition, Hemmings Bakehouse is relocating its bakery to the farm, so artisan bread made with the award-winning flour will be available from farmers' markets in west Kent.

"Bill Hemmings is quite a young baker," said Ms Eckley.

"He's in his mid-twenties and has been running his fledgling baking business, sharing premises with another business, and taking his

product to farmers' markets in west Kent.

"He's at a point where he needs his own premises and as one of our largest flour customers we are providing space for him.

"He specialises in artisan breads, like sourdough, and a lot of Italian breads, like ciabatta and the like."

While retail interest is always growing for more niche local products, the farmers' market remains one of the best places to buy high-quality foods.

"If you are buying it from a farmers' market, you are generally getting a fresher product," said Ms Eckley. "With our flour, we generally

mill it within 48 hours of the event where we are selling it.

"There is nothing added to the flour – it is a very natural product.

"Any flours other than wholemeal have to be fortified, which is a relic of rationing, where products were fortified to ensure people were getting enough nutrition.

"Currently, makers do not have to say what they have fortified their product with, but that is set to change at the end of the year.

"We are now looking very closely at making new products and different types of flour, and we're very much looking forward to producing new things."



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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

The private way to our poorer health

AS A GP of 30 years I was pleased to see at last some media coverage of the Coalition Government's NHS privatisation (last week's KoS).

What Broadstairs patients have experienced is happening across the country, but people don't know about it (or, frankly, pay any attention) until it happens to them.

I believe it's government policy (although you won't see it in any manifesto) to get rid of small practices, developing large impersonal groups run by private companies like Concordia.

Size is important so that a group can make a decent profit.

Broadstairs was apparently too small for this group but a typical example.

A contract is often won on low cost and unworkable promises such as being open 12 hours seven days a week.

In the Midlands, once the contract had been secured, a practice had only locum doctors and closed early most days through lack of staff.

A good practice had been destroyed. This was featured on Channel 4.

The government also denies it is privatising the NHS despite what is happening fitting all the definitions.

If you hear a politician saying this, he or she is either not telling the truth or ignorant.

When challenged, as in last week's article, they will try to convince the public that there is nothing wrong with privatisation anyway.

When you take your car in for repair, how many people, when a mechanic says you need this new part and the cost is, say, £200, are 100 per cent confident that this is totally true and money is not influencing the garage at all?

Not many.

When private companies are running our health care, their primary duty is to make money for their shareholders.

Will you be sure that the referral, treatment or scan you were told you didn't need is a reflection of the truth?

Most people trust their doctors at the moment as their only concern is what is best for the patient.

Put money in the equation, as in the US, and that trust goes.

Your health is too important to take the gamble of someone profiting from it.

Join the fight against the privatisation of our NHS.

Dr Paul Hobday,
Maidstone

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Government should ban this awful trade

IN 2012 Thanet council banned the live-exports trade from the Port of Ramsgate after an incident involving two sheep drowning and more than 40 being slaughtered due to lame animals being boarded on trucks when, I believe, they never should have been.

The traders took Thanet council to court and won, resuming live exports from the port.

Animal-rights campaigners are constantly protesting to get the live-exports trade banned.

Sheep and calves are packed so tightly into lorries that limbs have often been seen sticking through lorry bars and they have been left in this condition for hours.

There is not enough water on board to hydrate all animals through their entire journey.

Sheep pass out and some die when reaching their final destination. These animals endure hours of torture – all for buyers outside of our country.

They can pass three slaughter houses on way to the port, which begs the question 'Why can't animals be slaughtered at the nearest abattoirs and then the meat be transported?'

This is because of greed over compassion.

England has strict humane animal regulations when slaughtering animals for the meat trade, yet the government allows live exports to be shipped to countries that have insufficient animal-welfare standards.

It is extremely hypocritical of our government to allow such a barbaric and torturous practice.

The money involved with live exports does not even contribute to our country so has no economic value to us.

The lorry-drivers are often foreign; therefore this is not about opportunities for British civilians.

Animal-health experts who arrive at Ramsgate to inspect the animals have very limited time and resources to check on the animals.

They are not allowed to enter the lorries, only using a ladder to peer through the bars to check on the animals.

There is absolutely no way they can sufficiently check all animals before boarding.

This has resulted in injured animals carrying on with their journey in tremendous pain.

We are now seeing three-week-old calves passing through the port for the disgusting veal trade in other countries.

Experts in the export trade have admitted that these animals endure a lot of suffering and fear, even though every step available is being undertaken, which proves the incompetence of the process.

We want the government to listen to us and stop being a part of such a cruel and barbaric trade.

Our government needs to listen to its people to stop live exports.

Kim Vincent, Ramsgate

Never forget The Boys' Brigade

AS the country marks the centenary of the First World War, The Boys' Brigade is reflecting on the contribution its members made.

Looking back, it is perhaps surprising to learn that within the first year of The Great War 100,000 officers and ex-members joined the armed forces to serve our country.

Our own historical records show Boys' Brigade members and ex-members took on many different valuable roles such as buglers enlisted to sound the all-clear when air raids were over, offering support at ambulance stations, guarding public infrastructure and helping deliver messages.

Among those who risked their lives, 11 were awarded the Victoria Cross and 93 the Military Cross among other medals for service.

In honour of our fellow members, 10 young people from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland attended The National Commemorative Service for the Centenary of the start of the First World War on Monday, August 4, to mark Britain's involvement in the First World War at Glasgow Cathedral.

This is a thought-provoking time and as we celebrate our 130th year I am grateful to all who have come before us and to our current members who continue to contribute so richly to our societies.

Steve Dickinson,
CEO The Boys' Brigade

The perfect play from a master

REGARDING last week's feature on The Perfect Murder, I have already had the opportunity to see this play in Dartford, where I used to live, on its first run and cannot wait to see it again!

In my opinion it is better than Agatha Christie's The Mousetrap. Black bin-liners also have a star role in The Perfect Murder and you will never think about them again in the same way.

I have the privilege of having a signed copy of Peter James's book Dead Simple, which is coming to the stage next year – unfortunately, I don't know where.

If you have never read any of James's books, start reading now.

Not only is this The Perfect Murder, it is the perfect play.

Angela Grover,
Canterbury

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles which tie in with our parent company Archant's overall mission statement.

Archant's mission statement is: "We bring together motivated buyers and sellers through the creation of unique and compelling content and community expertise." This is summed up in the strapline 'Inspiring Communities'.

The way KoS will create our unique and compelling content is to follow these 10 principles: **Kent on Sunday will:**

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between

- 7) news, comment and advertising.
- 8) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 9) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
- 10) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
- 11) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.



Hayesden Lake

by **Robert Reilly**
from **Tonbridge**

If your picture is printed on this page you will receive an any-duration **Dover-Calais** return crossing for a car and up to five passengers, valid for a year, courtesy of...



To see your photograph printed, email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk, or post it to **Archant KOS Media, Images of Kent, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP**. Be sure to include your name, address and a contact telephone number. Unfortunately we cannot return any prints, and please do not send negatives. Note: all digital images must be no less than 200dpi.

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The Columbus Lounge



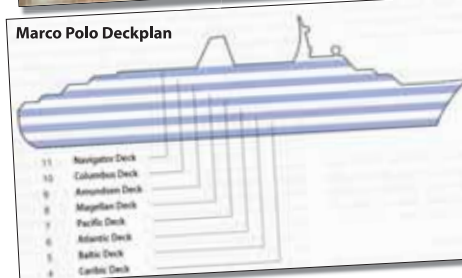
The Jade Wellness Centre



The Waldorf Restaurant



The Captain's Club



Marco Polo Deckplan

GN Voyages is pleased to be working with Cruise & Maritime Voyages to bring to you a selection of their scenic ocean cruises on board the classic Marco Polo. This 800 passenger, 8 deck ship offers exceptional value cruising holidays, often including ports of call that larger resort style ships can't access, therefore offering more varied and interesting itineraries. The Marco Polo offers an intimate atmosphere; excellent service standards from a friendly and attentive crew; a delicious full board cuisine plus afternoon teas and late night snacks; stylish big show entertainment; daytime activities programme; informative guest speakers; a wide choice of shore excursions and overall a more traditional and leisurely style cruising experience.

Culinary delights

For many guests dining in the elegant Waldorf restaurant is the highlight of the day. Carefully chosen menus present a blend of traditional cuisine and international specialities to suit all palates. Starters followed by delicious soups and salads, followed by delicious main courses ranging from seafood to Italian pastas to traditional roasts, finished off with a tempting range of desserts. There is the informal Marco's bistro too for a more relaxed buffet-style meal.

Glittering entertainment

After dinner make your way to the theatre style Marco Polo Lounge where the entertainment team will display their talents in a glittering and colourful 'big show' accompanied by the ship's live orchestra or if you prefer a quieter alternative, enjoy a drink in Scott's Bar, play cards in the Nansen Card room or relax in one of the five lounge areas.

Cabins

All cabins have twin beds, en-suite facilities with washbasin, shower and WC, television with satellite channels and Bridge Cam, steward service twice a day, music channel, telephone, safe, hairdryer, air-conditioning, bathroom amenity pack, complimentary pool towel and a good range of wardrobe and drawer storage space. GN Voyages offer a selection of cabins graded according to size and deck position ranging from category 1 - standard twin inner to category 12 - premium twin ocean view.

Marco Polo Facilities

- Outdoor swimming pool • 3 whirlpools • Shopping arcade • Waldorf restaurant • Marco's Bistro • Marco Polo lounge • Captain's Club • Palm Garden lounge • Columbus lounge • Scott's Bar • Livingstone Library • Nansen Card Room • Internet cafe • Jade Wellness Centre offering hairdressing, beauty treatments, fitness and exercise equipment, sauna & massage

Sailing from Tilbury

Marco Polo sails from the London Cruise Terminal at Tilbury in Essex which is situated on the River Thames just 7 miles from junction 31 of the M25. The Port of Tilbury offers pre-bookable long-term car parking at £11 per vehicle per night.

*Buy One Get One Free offer applies to new bookings made by 31 August 2014. First adult pays the per person price and second adult travels FREE. Offer subject to availability and may be withdrawn without notice. Prices are based on two adults sharing a twin cabin and excludes gratuities at £5 per person per night.

Baltic Cities, St Petersburg & Comedy Legends Cruise

13 days Full Board 15 October, 2014

A voyage to the Baltic is always an enticing prospect and this late summer cruise is not to be missed. It's a wonderful opportunity to explore Scandinavian kingdoms and countries once locked firmly behind the iron curtain. With six fascinating ports of call you'll visit culture-rich cities with awe-inspiring architecture.

INCLUDED: 12 nights full board cruise on the Marco Polo • Delicious full board cuisine • Afternoon teas and late night snacks • Captain's Cocktail Party • Self service tea & coffee (6am to 10pm) • Celebrity interviews, themed cabaret and a chance to meet stars from iconic BBC TV series including: Jeffrey Holland - Hi De Hi; Vicky Michelle - 'Allo 'Allo; and Melvyn Hayes - It Ain't Half Hot Mum! • Daytime activities and leisure facilities • Portage of luggage, port to cabin • Port Taxes

Buy-1-get-1-Free offer does not apply to this cruise

FROM £979pp
Quote MP10-K05



Vicky Michelle

Melvyn Hayes

Land of the Northern Lights Cruise

15 days Full Board 16 February, 2015

Viewing the spectacular Aurora Borealis is one of life's must dos and there's no better way to enjoy this natural wonder than to combine it with a 14-night cruise along Norway's beautiful coastline. The Marco Polo calls at exciting ports along the fjords with breathtaking scenery and crosses the Arctic Circle. Highlights include the Svartisen Glacier, historic Bergen and Alta - known as the 'City of the Northern Lights'.

INCLUDED: 14 nights full board cruise on the Marco Polo • Delicious full board cuisine • Afternoon teas and late night snacks • Captain's Cocktail Party • Self-service tea & coffee (6am to 10pm) • On-board lectures about astronomy and the Northern Lights • Nightly entertainment • Daytime activities and leisure facilities • Portage of luggage, port to cabin • Port Taxes

FROM £1909*
Quote MP2-K05



The Aurora Borealis

Springtime Gardens Cruise

7 days Full Board 27 March, 2015

Discover some of the continent's hidden gems on this exciting 6-night cruise showcasing some spectacular destinations and beautiful gardens in springtime. Visit Amsterdam with an optional tour to the famous Keukenhof Gardens and a chance to visit Monet's House and Garden in Normandy. Discover the scenic Channel Islands and the beautiful city of Bruges, 'Venice of the North', with its rich history in art and culture.

INCLUDED: 6 nights full board cruise on the Marco Polo • Delicious full board cuisine • Afternoon teas and late night snacks • Captain's Cocktail Party • Self-service tea & coffee (6am to 10pm) • On-board lectures • Nightly entertainment • Daytime activities and leisure facilities • Portage of luggage, port to cabin • Port Taxes

FROM £799*
Quote MP3-2-K05



Amsterdam

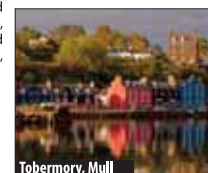
British Isles Easter Cruise

10 days Full Board 2 April, 2015

Circumnavigating the UK is a superb way to enjoy the springtime climate and see the wonders of the British Isles' coast line. Visiting ancient sites, Royal towns, quaint fishing villages, medieval cathedrals, and spending nine nights full board on the Marco Polo, this cruise offers a fabulous itinerary including the Orkneys, the Isle of Mull, Dublin, the Isles of Scilly, Guernsey and Honfleur in Normandy.

INCLUDED: 9 nights full board cruise on the Marco Polo • Delicious full board cuisine • Afternoon teas and late night snacks • Captain's Cocktail Party • Self-service tea & coffee (6am to 10pm) • Guest Speaker and arts & crafts • Nightly entertainment • Daytime activities and leisure facilities • Portage of luggage, port to cabin • Port Taxes

FROM £1,199*
Quote MP4-K05



Tobermory, Mull

Majestic Fjordland Cruise

9 days Full Board 25 April, 2015

A delightful mix of some of Norway's prettiest towns and villages set against a backdrop of spectacular scenery, this cruise brings you the best of fjordland in all its natural splendour. Marco Polo takes you deep into the heart of the Norwegian fjords and every day promises a host of new, exciting landscapes from towering peaks and beautiful valleys to tumbling waterfalls and awe-inspiring glaciers.

INCLUDED: 8 nights full board cruise on the Marco Polo • Delicious full board cuisine • Afternoon teas and late night snacks • Captain's Cocktail Party • Self service tea & coffee (6am to 10pm) • On-board lectures • Nightly entertainment • Daytime activities and leisure facilities • Portage of luggage, port to cabin • Port Taxes

FROM £1,069*
Quote MP4-2-K05



Cruising the fjords

business

Unemployment figures drop across the county

Jamie Weir

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

THE county saw further falls in unemployment this week, but the news came with a sting in the tail – wage growth for workers has slowed to its lowest rate since 2001.

The drop of 743 people collecting Jobseeker's Allowance across the county was the fifth consecutive fall in unemployment.

Only one district in the county bucked the trend, with Shepway adding 34 people to its queues. Thanet and Medway were at the other end of the spectrum, showing the biggest drops in the county with falls of 124 and 130 people each.

That drop brought the jobless total in Medway to 4,501, while Thanet's total fell to 3,467. Unemployment across the whole of the South East was down by 4.4 per cent.

Iain Duncan Smith, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, said: "In the past, many people in our society were written off and trapped in unemployment and welfare dependency. But through our welfare reforms,



JOBS: More people are in work

we are helping people to break that cycle and get back into work.

"The government's long-term economic plan to build a stronger economy and a fairer society is working – with employment going up, record drops in youth unemployment and hundreds of thousands of people replacing their signing-on book with a wage packet.

"This is transformative, not only for these individuals and their families, but for society as a whole.

"That is why we have set full employment as one of our key targets – bringing security and hope to families who have lost their jobs and others who never had jobs.

"The best way to help even more people into work is to go on delivering a plan that's creating growth."

But it is not all good news for the UK economy, with the Bank of England slashing its forecasts for wage growth this week.

In its quarterly report on the health of the country's economy, it cut its forecast for wage growth in half.

The bank now expects the average salary to grow by just 1.25 per cent in 2014, compared with its earlier forecast of 2.5 per cent.

Governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney said: "Because of the labour market we see higher rates of participation in the economy.

"The price of labour hasn't been moving up with the wage data over the course of the last year, so businesses have substituted labour for capital."

£10m boost for building firm

TONBRIDGE developer, Milwood Designer Homes has been given a £10 million cash injection as part of a deal with a London property company.

The deal was managed by Kent firm Cripps.

Milwood managing director John Elliott said: "The £10 million we have received will enable us to bring forward a greater number of sites over the next four years, with knock-on benefits for home-buyers and the local economy."

Pensions: sign up for schemes

KENT'S SMEs have been warned to ensure they enrol their business into workplace pensions soon, otherwise they may find themselves at the end of a very long queue.

With a total of 1.6 million SMEs and 9.3 million employees required to enrol in pension schemes over the next four years, the Pensions Regulator has advised employers to prepare 12 months ahead of their due date.

Road and rail links help to make town a popular choice

A NEW study has crowned Ashford the 'best town for business' in Kent.

The study, which was commissioned by Locate in Kent – a group set up to promote the county's business opportunities – measured key business figures to create a rating for each part of the county.

Ashford came top of the survey, beating back county town Maidstone, which topped the poll last time it was conducted.

The poll highlighted the strength of Ashford's road and rail networks for improving local businesses connectivity, with two-thirds of those surveyed in the poll commending the town's high-speed rail link.

More than 60 per cent of respondents said Ashford had improved as a business location. One survey response stated that Ashford's willingness to grow is considered more "welcoming and accommodating than other locations".

Gerry Clarkson, leader of Ashford Borough Council, said: "This study proves what we already knew – that the advantages of locating your business in Ashford outweigh any other town in Kent. It is great news and will help us in our efforts to drive economic growth, boost employment and generate greater prosperity for all our residents."

CLL Clarkson continued: "The study is an invaluable insight into how Ashford is viewed by developers, investors and others who play a key role in economic development in the UK.

"It is hugely encouraging to see that our efforts to promote Ashford are paying off.

"We are not complacent about the size of the task facing us in achieving the economic growth we are all striving for and we will examine the results of the study very carefully to see what we can learn and apply these to continually improving the area as a place for business."

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A-LEVEL RESULTS...



Be inspired to be the best you can

WHETHER you're waiting for your A-level results or thinking about what to do now the kids have flown the coop, Ashford College and West Kent College can offer you a range of university-level options.

University and professional courses traditionally start in mid-September and some programmes can be studied part-time, in the evenings or even online, providing the flexibility to gain a relevant qualification alongside work or childcare.

Alternatively, there are numerous professional qualifications available to provide you with chartered status in your field, such as accounting, marketing or human resources.

The Hadlow Group has recently taken over at Ashford and West Kent Colleges (formerly known as K College) and, with their outstanding reputation, they are looking to build on the successful higher-education offer.

Ashford College campus traditionally focuses on skills within the construction and engineering and IT management industries, offering a wide range of work-related pro-



grammes awarded by Edexcel and the University of Kent.

West Kent College's Tonbridge

campus has more of a lean towards the creative arts, offering a wide range of art, design and photography

programmes awarded by the University of Kent.

Other courses offered at both campuses include computing and teacher training.

Studying at a local college rather than a university can reduce your travel and accommodation costs, not to mention lowering your course fees.

Smaller class sizes means that you will get close support from lecturing staff and regular pastoral support and contact.

Our inspiring and effective lecturers have notable industry links and excellent, up-to-date subject knowledge, as well as extensive teaching experience, so you will still get the same level of quality and have full access to the resources you need.

Alternatively, you might be considering coming back into the workplace from a career break and need to brush up your business skills or gain accreditation in your chosen field.

Foundation Degrees and accredited programmes such as CIM, CIPD and AAT can be studied on the job and will give you a professional qualification to go alongside your work experience.

Of course, if you are not able to commit to a year-long course, then you could consider any one of a wide range of shorter courses.

Lasting anything from a day to a few weeks, most colleges offer subjects that can refresh your skills or give you a chance to try out something completely new.

So why not take this opportunity to develop yourself? While you're at it, this summer we're offering you a great chance to win some fabulous prizes – a Virgin Experience voucher worth £250 and a GoPro camera to capture the action!

All you need to do is show us the skills you've been learning – whether it's creating a water feature, mastering cake-baking, learning to scuba-diving or getting the hang of watercolours – send us a photo or video selfie and you could be in with a chance of winning.

Find out more about your new local colleges...

■ Ashford College: 0845 207 8220 at www.ashford.ac.uk

■ West Kent College: 0845 207 8220 at www.westkent.ac.uk



#develop yourself at Your Local University

Did you know Ashford College offers a range of university programmes awarded by University of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church University and Edexcel? Whether you're looking for a place through Clearing or want to apply as a mature student, you can develop yourself with a whole world of opportunity on your doorstep!

Studying locally offers great benefits:

- Lower costs – no rented accommodation and low travel expenses
- Affordable qualifications – our tuition fees are extremely competitive
- Smaller class sizes – giving you personal attention and extra support
- A solid foundation for work – Foundation Degrees combine work-based learning with theory taught in class
- Strong links to industry – partnerships with employers across the South-East

We still have places for a September start on a selection of university programmes based at our Ashford campus, in areas such as computing, construction, engineering and teacher training. We also offer professional qualifications for business, including AAT, CIM and CIPD.

To find out more about what's still available, visit:

www.ashford.ac.uk

Part of the Hadlow Group





A-LEVEL RESULTS...



Kent College celebrates its best-ever A-level results



Kent College students and staff are celebrating the school's best-ever year of A-level results... 77 per cent of all examination entries were achieved at A*-B grades with a 100 per cent pass rate.

All students gained places at their universities of choice, including Oxbridge.

Particular congratulations for high levels of academic achievement go to the following top performers at A-level:

Harvey Almond, Sebastian Blummers, Elean-

or Cane, Rui Cao, Dan Carter, Ivan Chak, Jeffery Choi, Daisy Dong, Victor Gu, Harry Kim, Katherine Letley, Albert Leung, Maurice Li, Archie Mitchison, Katie Mounce, William Norman, Derin Okunoren, Frankie Pickworth, Victor Princewill, William Robey, Nathaniel Shaughnessy, Helen Sotillo, Man Wang and Felix Walthes.

These results follow IB outcomes that were similarly positive. Irfan Shabeer and Helena Tripp both scored 37 points (equivalent to four A*s at A-level).

Irfan will go on to study economics at Exeter University, while Helena, who was awarded a bilingual diploma, will study English literature at Queen Mary, London University.

Nolan Stuart has been admitted to the Honors Program at Northeastern University, Boston, US, with an academic scholarship to study civil engineering.

Headmaster Dr David Lamper said: "I am delighted with the very high levels of academic achievement shown by the students

who took examinations this summer. They worked extremely hard while at the same time adding an immense amount to the extra-curricular, musical, dramatic and sporting life of our community.

"They have been excellent ambassadors of Kent College and they deserve every success.

"I am also delighted for my colleagues who have worked so hard in supporting and nurturing the development of all our students.

"Many congratulations to them all."



Kent College Canterbury

An outstanding school for boys and girls aged 3 - 18

RATED ★★★★★
SCHOOL GUIDE

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from 3 to 18

Senior School Open Morning
October 4th 9:00am until 12:30pm

Senior School - 01227 763231

www.kentcollege.com

Junior School - 01227 762436



A-LEVEL RESULTS...



Ashford School sets the pace in class, on stage and on track



Off to university

FOUR Ashford School students have secured places at medical school and two are off to study veterinary science after gaining excellent grades in their A-levels this year.

Early indications are that most Ashford School students have gained places at the university of their choice, with almost two-thirds of the year group achieving the threshold for entry into the UK's elite universities (A, B, B).

Aiming high

IT'S been a busy summer for Ashford School's drama pupils, who have been performing at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Together, they wrote and produced a play especially for the festival and spent the first week of August in Scotland.

"This is almost unique among performers of their age and is doubly impressive as they wrote this historical drama themselves," said head-teacher Mike Buchanan, who went to Edinburgh to watch the cast.

"The writing is beautifully authentic 1940s American English and the script is well researched."

This is the second year Ashford School's theatre company, 8PB, have performed at the festival.

Last year they were given a four-star review by a critic at the festival.

Outstanding

AT Ashford School, students and staff are given every opportunity to extend their learning and to satisfy their natural curiosities... and the chance to perform at the festival is part of this.

A team of inspectors picked up on the buzzing school ethos when they visited in March and declared Ashford School excellent or outstanding in every one of the 15 categories.

The results of the inspection testify that Ashford School offers an outstanding education where "pupils are excellent learners who enjoy their work" and where "pupils make excellent progress".

The inspection report comments further that "pupils' creativity is exceptional" and that "teaching fosters higher-level thinking and application, enabling pupils to progress rapidly."

The programme of more than 80 co-curricular activities is judged outstanding; the careers guidance in the senior school is exceptional; and pupils show excellent moral awareness.

Olympic gold-medallist

MEANWHILE, as the new academic

year approaches, the school is preparing for the official opening of its new sports centre.

Nestled by the banks of the River Stour, the centre boasts a Sports England-size hall as well as changing facilities for home and away teams, offices for sports staff and a social room with a balcony over the school's AstroTurf.

In September the school will welcome Olympic gold-medallist Lizzy Yarnold to conduct the opening ceremony.

Lizzy has a string of accolades to her name, including 2014 Olympic champion in the women's skeleton bobs, 2013-14 World Cup champion, 2012 Junior world champion and 2012 and 2013 FIBT World Championship medallist.

First-class facilities

THE development of the school's facilities will continue this academic year with new sports facilities on the 25 acres of land to the west of the prep school at Great Chart, including first-class provision for cricket, hockey, football, rugby and other team sports.

To find out more about the first-class education on offer at Ashford, call our registrar, Mrs Rachael Cox, on 01233 739030.

Ashford School: a day and boarding school for boys and girls aged 0-18 years.

AN INDEPENDENT DAY AND BOARDING SCHOOL FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AGED 0-18



ASHFORD SCHOOL

DEFINING EXCELLENCE

An outstanding school in the heart of Ashford with pupils who are exceptionally creative. ISI inspection 2014

We are one of only a few schools in England to have received such a glowing endorsement.

Come and see how your child could benefit from an environment where pupils welcome challenge and achieve excellent A-level results.

For enquiries please call or email our registrar Rachael Cox.

01233 739030
registrar@ashfordschool.co.uk

A full range of bursaries and scholarships is available.



ASHFORD SCHOOL
Adventurous Learning



A-LEVEL RESULTS...



Technology careers beckon for students

THE Leigh UTC specialises in engineering and computer sciences, offering students a superb education in a state-of-the-art building that will give them the specialist skills, knowledge and experience to have a successful career in the technology sector.

Steve Leahey, principal of the new Leigh UTC, which opens to students on Monday, September 8, said: "At the moment, you're probably facing some very important choices about your education."

"You'll know that getting these decisions right is highly likely to influence your future career and whether you reach the heights you want to reach."

"At the ground-breaking Leigh UTC we know we are at the very forefront of education for post-16 students."

"Our approach to learning, which involves lots of specialised input from industry and aca-

demie partners, will provide you with a great foundation for the future."

"We offer sixth-form students the chance to tailor their studies to fit their individual interests, abilities and ambitions."

Alongside their academic studies, students will spend one day a week in a work-experience programme.

The Leigh UTC offers different progression routes, which include A-levels, Level 3 vocational qualifications and advanced apprenticeships in engineering and IT.

All our students will have the opportunity to follow professional qualifications, which include Cisco Academy, Microsoft Academy and AutoDesk CAD.

The Leigh UTC will be holding an open day on Saturday, October 4, and an open evening on Wednesday, October 15, for parents and students.

Further details can be obtained from our website, www.theleighutc.org.uk.



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GET to university with one of our University Level Qualifications.

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We offer a range of different subject areas and a typical offer for entry to one of our HNC/Ds is between 80 and 120 UCAS points. What's more, they are a valuable qualification in their own right, well respected by employers, giving you the opportunity to really boost your earning power and career prospects.

The college also offers a generous package of additional benefits relevant to your chosen

course and an additional bonus is that most of our HNCs and HNDs feature a visit abroad to give your studies an international perspective.

Discover what these courses could offer you. Attend one of our clearing events and you will be entered in a prize draw to win a £100 Amazon voucher.

Clearing events, Broadstairs Campus:

Friday, August 15: 9am-4pm in the Welcome Building.

Tuesday, August 19: 9am-4pm in the Welcome Building.

Tuesday, September 9: 9am-4pm in the Welcome Building.

CLEARING HOTLINE OPENS AUGUST 14:

phone 01843 605062

To learn more, visit www.eastkent.ac.uk/clearing.

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CLEARING EVENTS - Broadstairs Campus

Friday 15 August	9am-4pm
Tuesday 19 August	9am-4pm
Tuesday 9 September	9am-4pm

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By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

Preview

Toyota Aygo

Price: from £8,595
Driving appeal: Not driven yet
Image: ★★★★★
Space: ★★★★★
Value: ★★★★★
Running costs: ★★★★★
How green?: ★★★★★
Best rival: Hyundai i10

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CHANGING FACE: The Aygo shows the customising potential of the front end's crossed trim and (below) the Rav4 and the Auris Hybrid Sport Tourer

Hybrid line-up given boost

The world's No 1 car-maker is nicely poised to make more hay from the great diesel fume debate, but the brand really isn't just about hybrids

IT'S an ill wind that doesn't blow somebody some good, so the current furore about diesels can only be good news for Toyota's petrol-electric hybrids.

The world's No 1 car-maker has pinned much of its faith – and research and development cash – on running a petrol engine in tandem with an electric motor to create a low-CO₂-emission dream machine.

But while hybrid efficiency keeps making great strides, the technology had been unable to lay a killer punch on low-emission-CO₂ diesel equivalents, which have also advanced quickly and don't bear the weight penalty of two powertrains plus the electric motor's batteries.

Demand for diesel cars rocketed tenfold in the Noughties when the Labour government began penalising high-CO₂-emitting cars through higher road tax, but the boot is on the other foot now as fears grow about other diesel emissions of nitrous oxide and dioxide – known collectively as NOx – particularly in urban areas.

But Toyota says its hybrids run virtually without NOx emissions, so maybe it's time for such powertrains to take off. The Japanese marque offers three well-known models: the Prius, slightly smaller VW Golf-size Auris Hybrid and the Yaris Hybrid.

Not that Toyota needs any luck in sales, after building a long-term reputation for reliability and customer satisfaction underpinned



by a five-year/100,000-mile warranty, and underlined recently by the 2014 Which? Car Survey.

This revealed that the Auris and Auris Hybrid – both built in the UK at Toyota's huge Burnaston plant near Derby – were the most reliable models in the medium-car category, while its seven-seat Verso was named as the UK's most reliable MPV.

The brand's RAV4 – currently celebrating its 20th anniversary after launching the SUV market – was also narrowly pipped to the top slot in the 4x4/SUV class.

Meanwhile, the brand's Yaris and Yaris Hybrid superminis both achieved top-five survey placings.

Collectively, these successes clinched fourth place overall for Toyota among the survey's best car brands. Which? Car Guide said: "If you're looking for dependability, look no further than Toyota."

This makes the point that while the Toyota hybrids are cutting-edge technology, they are also reliable.



Ominously for rivals, Toyota has also started to raise its game on styling, with the new Auris Sport Tourer being an elegant-looking estate, while the newly-launched second-generation Aygo city car is a real joker alongside its sisters, the Peugeot 108 and Citroën C1.

The little Toyota wears an X-shaped contrasting inset in the front end that looks almost Renault-esque and should give an edge in customer personalisation.

New Aygo prices start at £8,595, though there may still be some launch discounts, and the introduction of the Toyota X-touch multimedia system and X-nav navigation option on the car will enhance appeal to younger buyers.

If you seek real character in the Toyota line-up, though, look no further than the GT86 sports coupé – hopefully to be joined by a Mazda MX-5-chasing convertible variant.

This car (from £25,110) features a flat-four boxer engine, courtesy of Subaru, which allows a low-slung rakish body for optimum rear-wheel-drive handling – a tribute to hot Toyotas from the past.

Other view...

the Petrolhead

I've worried of late that Toyota is too obsessed with hybrids, but the GT86 is an impressive retort to such thoughts

She says

Everyone likes a reliable car, but they also want something that excites a little – I'm not sure Toyotas do that for me

the Eco-warrior

Good luck to Toyota, which must have sometimes felt like a lone voice when developing and promoting hybrid technology



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TOYOTA

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WARRANTY

Model shown is MY14 Auris Hybrid Excel 1.8 VVT-i Hybrid e-CVT £22,890. Offer excludes pearlescent paint extra £650. Prices correct at time of going to press. *4.9% APR Representative and £2,000 Finance Deposit Allowance only available on new retail orders of MY14 Auris when ordered between 1st July and 30th September 2014 and registered and financed through Toyota Financial Services by 31st December 2014 on a 3 year AccessToyota (PCP) plan with 0-35% deposit. Toyota Financial Services (UK) PLC; registered office Great Burgh, Burgh Heath, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 5UZ. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status to over 18s. Other finance offers are available but cannot be used in conjunction with this offer. Excess miles over 30,000 charged at 8p per mile. Toyota Centres are independent of Toyota Financial Services. Terms and conditions apply. Affordable finance through AccessToyota. 5 year/100,000 mile manufacturer warranty subject to terms and conditions.

MY14 Auris Hybrid. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 72.4 (3.9) - 80.7 (3.5), Extra Urban 72.4 (3.9) - 78.5 (3.6), Combined 70.6 (4.0) - 78.5 (3.6). CO₂ Emissions 92g/km - 84g/km. The mpg and CO₂ figures quoted relate to combined electric and petrol cycles and are sourced from official EU-regulated test results obtained through laboratory testing. These are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

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Fast Range Rover

LAND ROVER has created its fastest production model and a new label for all Jaguar Land Rover high-performance models – it's the £93,450 Range Rover Sport SVR, with a 550PS (543bhp) V8 supercharged engine.

This delivers a supercar-class 0-60mph in 4.5 seconds, and 162mph top speed, and the car has lapped the legendary Nürburgring Nordschleife circuit in 8.14 minutes – one of the best times ever for a production SUV.



Yeti Monte Carlo

SKODA is the special/limited-edition king as we approach September's 64 Registration plate frenzy.

The Czech marque's latest 'special' is a smart upmarket Monte Carlo version of its Yeti SUV, priced at £24,390 and joining similar high-spec variants in the Skoda Fabia supermini and Citigo city-car line-ups. The new Yeti has the signature Monte Carlo black roof, black detailing on spoiler and front grille and black door-mirrors.



Hyundai's new i20

NO doubt concerned that someone would publish a spy shot in advance of its planned global debut at the Paris Motor Show in October, Hyundai has released pictures of the all-new i20 supermini.

Far better looking than the current car, it's longer and wider and delivers one of the most spacious cabins in the supermini segment.

Hyundai will also claim a 'first in class' by offering a panoramic sunroof.

PEOPLE-CARRIER: The new-look C4 Grand Picasso offers stylish looks, acres of usable space, some frugal diesel engines and a host of toys for the driver

Citroën Picasso takes MPV cubism that step further

French marque shows rivals how to execute the art of the people carrier, reveals **Steve Loader**

CITROËN GRAND C4 PICASSO EXCLUSIVE + BLUE HDi 150 AUTO

Price: £27,855

Driving appeal: ★★★★★

Image: ★★★★★

Space: ★★★★★

Value: ★★★★★

Running costs: ★★★★★

Reliability: ★★★★★

How green?: ★★★★★

Road tax: £30/year (0 year one)

Best rival: Ford Grand C-Max

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ASKED what he or she drives, a Citroën Picasso driver might simply reply "a Picasso".

This just goes to show how the French marque's highly successful MPV series has virtually become a brand in its own right, an impression deepened by last year's arrival of the second-generation C4 Picassos – the Picasso fleet's flagship.

Selling in both five- and seven-seat formats, Citroën gave each a distinct identity before. This time the relationship is rather more blurred but no bad thing when the overall design is pure class, epitomised by eye-catching and aerodynamic wraparound front-end styling.

It's the bigger Grand C4 tested here, though, in range-topping Exclusive + Blue HDi 150bhp Auto form.

It costs £27,855 and if this sounds like a lot of money you may also feel it's well spent on buying the impression that you, family and friends are flying along the road in your own private aeroplane.

This feeling comes from a classy cabin and huge wraparound screen,

mated with a full-length panoramic roof that is standard on top models, optional on others; you might not be able to look down on the clouds, but you have a pretty uninterrupted view of those above.

And if it seems airy outside, the Grand C4 cabin feels enormous, even bigger than the previous car, without any increase in length and giving high comfort levels to the front five passengers.

As ever on seven-seaters, though, compromise is called for on the rearmost pair of chairs, though users don't have to be quite so young or bent like Qasimodo as in some rivals. Access here is also easy due to the clever double-folding mechanism of the middle-row seats.

All five rear seats and the front passenger one can be folded independently to create different seating configurations, or all collapsed to offer an enormous van-like load area.

With all five rear ones down, the Grand C4 offers 2,181 litres of load space. That's not far off the brand's own Nemo small van's 2,500.



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Prices & offers apply to retail sales of qualifying Citroën models ordered & delivered 01/07/30/09/14 & include VAT, delivery to dealer & number plates, Government Registration Fee & 12 months' graduated vehicle excise duty. Black/metallic/pearlescent paint optional at extra cost. Elect 4 Personal Lease rentals shown apply to New C4 Picasso VTi 120 manual VTR. New C4 Picasso BlueHDi 150 manual Exclusive & New Grand C4 Picasso e-HDi 90 Airdream ETG6 VTR. New Grand C4 Picasso BlueHDi 150 automatic Exclusive respectively. One significant advance rental will be required, which varies by model, followed by 46 monthly rentals at the rates shown & a significant optional final rental. Excess mileage charges may apply if the agreed annual mileage is exceeded. Payment of the optional final rental extends the rental term (this does not transfer title of the vehicle) & requires an annual rental equivalent to one month's rental. Finance subject to status. Written quotations available on request from Citroën Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1QA, UK. Over 18s only. A guarantee may be required. Offers & specification correct at time of going to press from participating Dealers. Terms & conditions apply. Please ask us for details. Subject to stock availability.

Official Government fuel consumption figures (Range): Urban cycle, Extra urban, Combined (litres per 100km/mpg) & CO₂ emissions (g/km); Highest: New Citroën Grand C4 Picasso VTi 120 manual VTR 8.5/33.2, 4.9/57.6, 6.3/44.8, 145. Lowest: New Citroën Grand C4 Picasso e-HDi 90 Airdream ETG6 VTR 4.2/67.3, 3.5/80.7, 3.8/74.3, 98. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.



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DUE TO EXPANDING OUR PROVISION WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING VACANCIES:

RECEPTIONIST

To act as first point of reference for visitors and telephone callers, and contribute to an effective administrative service and support to The School.

£13,581 - £14,797 pa - 37 hours per week - Term Time Only, plus 1 week

LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS (TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS - EDUCATION)

The successful applicants will be responsible for assisting teachers in the school, for which previous experience is required:

£12,816 - £13,609 pa - 37½ hours per week,

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri - Term time only, plus 2 weeks*

(INDIVIDUAL LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS)

The successful applicants will be responsible for assisting teachers in the school, no previous experience is required, full training will be provided:

£11,596 - £12,111 pa - 37½ hours per week,

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri - Term time only, plus 2 weeks*

HOUSEPARENTS - EXTENDED PROVISION

Working as part of the childcare teams, this role involves providing care and support to children and young people mornings, evenings and weekends being a child or young person's Keyworker and some management responsibility.

£21,959 - £24,869 pa - 41 hours per week, (including late/early shifts and weekends) All Year Round

FEMALE WAKING NIGHT ATTENDANT - EXTENDED PROVISION

To be responsible for the supervision and care of the children and young people at night.

£22,954 - £25,373 pa (including night allowance)

- 36½ hours per week, (nights including weekends) All Year Round

Due to the nature of the personal care being provided, Section 7 (2) (a) of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 applies.

FEMALE WAKING NIGHT ATTENDANT

To be responsible for the supervision and care of the children and young people at night.

£20,712 - £23,082 pa (including 1/3 night allowance) - 36½ hours per week, (nights including weekends) Term

Time Only, plus 2 weeks *

Due to the nature of the personal care being provided, Section 7 (2) (a) of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 applies.

TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS - Residential Care

As part of the childcare team, these roles involve providing care and support to the children and young people in childcare teams mornings, evenings and weekends. These roles are aimed at candidates with some experience of Care work.

£14,013 - £14,880 plus 10% pa - 41 hours per week, (including weekends) - Term time only, plus 2 weeks *

CHILDCARE SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

As part of the childcare teams, these roles involve providing care and support to the children and young people mornings, evenings and weekends. No experience required, full training will be given.

£11,286 - £11,784 plus 10% pa - 36.5 hours per week, (including weekends - more hours available)

- Term time only, plus 2 weeks*

FLEXIBANK TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS

To provide additional support a cover within either the classrooms or residences.

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*For these roles there will also be up to a maximum of two weeks for the school's respite care provision if required, for which extra payment would be paid.

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Please note that CV's will not be considered.

The closing date for all applications is 4pm, Thursday 28th August 2014.



Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancy for the following staff:

IT ASSISTANT - Dover

Part time Hours: 22.5 Closing date: 22/08/2014

Salary: c£20,000 per annum (pro rata)

Experience

- Experienced in the use of MS Server 2008 r2, MS Office, MS Windows XP SP3 and MS Windows 7
- Understanding of principles of computer networking and systems
- Understanding of basic principles of data management and flow

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact:

Joseph Wright, Business Systems Manager on 01304 245949 or

joseph.wright@spencerhospitals.com

For a job description and application form please visit

www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers

Alternatively, please contact Emily Fraser, HR Assistant

Telephone: 01304 245951

E-mail: emily.fraser@spencerhospitals.com

Spencer Private Hospital is an equal opportunity employer.

This position is subject to a Disclosure and Barring check.



Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

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Joseph Wright, Business Systems Manager on 01304 245949 or

joseph.wright@spencerhospitals.com

For a job description and application form please visit

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Alternatively, please contact Emily Fraser, HR Assistant

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

GURPREET S SHERGILL trading as London Trucking Ltd of 38 Hillside Road, Dartford, Kent DA1 3NS is applying to change an existing license as follows
To add an operating centre to keep 4 goods vehicles and 0 trailers at Lafarge Tarmac Ltd, Watery Lane, Westwell, Ashford, Kent TN25 4JJ

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Susan Jayne Armstrong trading SJ Armstrong of 11 Medway Road, Crayford, Dartford, Kent DA1 4PN is applying to change an existing license as follows
To add an operating centre to keep 2 good vehicles and 2 trailers at Albion Parade, Gravesend, Kent DA12 2RN
Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

LICENSING ACT 2003

An applicant has been made by the Halpern Charitable Foundation for the premises: Nucleus Arts, 7-8 Granda House, Lower Stone Street, Maidstone ME15 6JR On the date of 8th August 2014.

The application of a variation of existing license 14/01948/LAPRE to include the sale of alcohol both on the premises and off the premises, during the hours of 07:00 to 23:00 every day. With additional late night opening on New Years Eve until 02:00.

Any person wishing to view the details of the application may contact the Licensing Partnership on 01732 227004.

Any person wishing to make a representation about the application should make them in writing on or before the 6th September 2014. Licensing Partnership, PO Box 182, Sevenoaks, TN13 1GP

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL Public Notice

A building certified for worship named Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC), Prayer City, Buckmore Park, Maidstone Road, Chatham in the registration district of Kent, in the Non-Metropolitan County of Kent, was on 25th June 2014 registered for solemnising marriages therein pursuant to section 41 of the Marriage Act 1949 as amended by Section 1 (1) of the Marriage Acts Amendment Act, 1958.

Superintendent Registrar
20 July 2014

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL Public Notice

A building certified for worship named Ashford Christian Fellowship, Centrepiece, Bank Street, Ashford in the registration district of Kent, in the Non-Metropolitan County of Kent, was on 17th July 2014 registered for solemnising marriages therein pursuant to section 41 of the Marriage Act 1949 as amended by Section 1 (1) of the Marriage Acts Amendment Act, 1958.

Superintendent Registrar
20 July 2014

PLANNING



THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

Y14/0854/SH - Park Cottage Forge Hill Acrise Folkestone Kent - Erection of a detached outbuilding.

Y14/0876/SH - The Old School House The Square Elham Canterbury Kent - Crown reduction back to previous points and reshape of a Field Maple and a Holm Oak situated within a conservation area.

Y14/0788/SH# - The Royal British Legion Park Street Lydd Romney Marsh Kent - Erection of 1 detached two storey dwelling with detached garage, a terrace of 3 two storey dwellings with rooms in the roofspace, together with associated parking and construction of artificial Badger Sett, following the demolition of existing clubhouse and outbuildings.

Y14/0864/SH - 47 Earls Avenue Folkestone Kent CT20 2HB - Change of use of building from a mixed use (C2/C3) to a school boarding house (C1).

Y14/0880/SH - Leigh Barton Farm North Leigh Stelling Minnis Canterbury Kent - Listed building consent for internal and external alterations in connection with conversion of garage for use as living accommodation, together with other external alterations to existing openings.

Y14/0850/SH - Airport Cafe Ashford Road Sellindge Ashford Kent - Retrospective application for a change of use of the site to include a lorry park; two portacabins for toilet facilities; and an extension of the existing parking area.

Y14/0873/SH - Land adjacent The Surgery Main Road Sellindge Kent - Hybrid application for the redevelopment of land between the A20 and M20 at Sellindge. Application for Outline permission (with all matters reserved except access) comprising of 200 dwellings, local mixed use centre containing parish offices (sul generis up to 100m2), commercial floorspace (A1/A3/A5 uses up to 200m2) together with access from the A20, associated roads, parking, earthworks, open space including attenuation features and landscaping. Full application comprising 50 dwellings, village green and play equipment, access from the A20, associated roads, community car parking, earthworks, open space including attenuation features and landscaping

Y14/0767/SH - Neale Cottage 1 Old School Mews Sandgate Hill Sandgate Folkestone Kent - Listed building consent for the re-pointing of exterior ragstone walls and other alterations.

Y14/0889/SH† - 92 North Road and 1 Castle Road Hythe Kent CT21 5DX - Works to trees situated within a conservation area comprising 2.5 metre overall crown reduction of a Sweet Chestnut and 3 metre overall reduction of a Sycamore

Any representations should be made in writing to the Head of Planning, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY or emailed to planning@shepway.gov.uk. Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. It should be noted that any representations received will be made available for public inspection.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

- The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

† - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

Applications can be viewed and comments made online at <http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

The applications marked (*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

C Lewis, Head of Planning
Shepway District Council

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Speaking frankly: boxing boss's

In the male-dominated fight world, Frank Maloney was revered as the manager of a world heavyweight champion, but he created shockwaves with the news that he had been living as a woman called Kellie. **Chris Murphy** reports on how the county's boxing community has responded.

FORMER boxing promoter Frank Maloney rocked the world of sport when he announced that he had been living as a woman called Kellie. In arguably the most machismo game of them all, the news seemed difficult to credit, but those in its fraternity have been united in their support of the legendary character.

Kellie is famed for having taken British boxer Lennox Lewis to world-heavyweight glory, but now the driving force behind so many excellent boxers is looking at a new life.

She shocked the ultra-masculine world of pugilism by finally adapting to what she says she has known for years – that, despite the male body, she is really a woman.

And, almost in a show of defiance, Kellie has said that she would like to return to boxing and become the only woman to bring through future British champions.

She is reportedly due to have sex-change treatment soon and is already dressing the part.

It has been a rocky road for Maloney in recent years. In 2012, she split from second wife Tracey after 15 years together when she revealed what she had been telling counsellors for a decade.

She remained at their smart home in

Chislehurst and it is understood that Kellie now lives in a Maidstone flat.

In a Christmas Day tweet she wrote: "In 2013 I am just going to get on with my work and not worry about anyone else or bad mouth. A peaceful year for me."

And, perhaps hinting at what was to come, she wrote two days later: "2013 is going to be a year not to forget. Life will take on a new meaning and a way forward – both in work and personally."

In 2009, one of her boxing stable committed suicide and it is said that Kellie suffered a heart attack when she found the body.

As a trainer, Kellie (then Frank) turned professional in the 1970s and later started promoting fights.

In 1989 she became Lennox Lewis's manager, a position she held up until 2001, becoming the only man to manage a British world-heavyweight champion. Now she wants to do it again... this time as a woman.

Now 61, Frank told The Mirror: "Nobody can ever deny what I have achieved as the only man to manage a British world-heavyweight champion. Now I would like to be the only female to guide the next generation of future British champions."

Kellie has been swamped with messages of encouragement since mak-



“ We are supporting him, all the clubs around Kent. You have just got to get on with life, that's what it's all about these days. It's 2014... ”

Club boss Veron Quarmy,
On boxing's backing for Kellie

Three podium finishes see Shakey keep first



SHANE 'Shakey' Byrne failed to add to his haul of wins during the weekend's series of three races at Oulton Park but still leads the MCE British Superbike Championship after seven rounds.

Despite being injured in a cycling accident prior to the event, Byrne, 37, took pole position on the Rapid Solicitors Kawasaki Ninja ZX-10R for Saturday's opening race and grabbed an immediate lead.

In one of the closest races of the year, there was less than half a second covering the top five at one stage, but Sittingbourne racer Byrne had to give best to Josh Brookes and then Ryuichi Kiyonari as the Japanese rider took the win ahead of the Aussie, with Byrne in third.

Sunday's weather was a lot more changeable, with rain making tyre

choice crucial, but it was the same three riders battling for the wins, with triple MCE BSB champion Byrne having to settle for third once more in the first race of the day behind Kiyonari and Brookes.

In the final race of the weekend, the rain stayed away, although the circuit still had some damp patches, but the Sittingbourne rider grabbed second place behind Brookes and continues to lead the way at the top of the championship standings.

The results also confirmed Byrne as the first rider to be confirmed as a Title Fighter in the end-of-season Showdown, which will determine the 2014 MCE British Superbike champion.

Byrne said: "My fitness isn't what it should have been this weekend due to a bit of an accident away from racing on Thursday, so with a second and

two thirds from the three races it hasn't been a bad weekend by my standards.

"Aside from having a bit less side-grip, the bike was great all weekend and more than capable of winning and it was simply a case of the rider not quite being strong enough.

"I felt better on the Sunday and, although changeable conditions make it tough as you don't want to be on damp patches with slick tyres, the slower pace helped me last longer.

"I'm lost for words with how Josh rode in the last race as he was going through the damp patches like they weren't there, so fair play to him.

"Three more podiums mean a good chunk of Podium Credits and hopefully I'll be back a lot stronger at the next round."

new life as Kellie

Picture: COURTESY OF BBC



ANOTHER LIFE: Kellie Maloney when she was Frank and campaigning for Ukup

ing the announcement. Another top promoter, Frank Warren, said: "You've got to have some guts to do what he's done."

Charlie Rumble, who runs a boxing academy in Sittingbourne, also backed his old pal, saying: "If he wants to become a lady, let him become a lady."

He told this newspaper: "I have known Frank since we were about 14 and I never had any idea he was thinking like this."

"We have been through a lot together and I didn't have a clue he thought that way."

Still showing difficulty in thinking of Maloney as a woman, Charlie often referred to Kellie as "him" before changing.

Thinking back to their long past together, he said: "He was a man. I am just astonished about it all, really. All these years and I just didn't have a clue."

"I never, ever thought he would do this. His first wife Jackie was a beautiful-looking girl – he then had other relationships and then he married Tracey, a stewardess. She was a pretty girl. He had children with them both."

"He always had models around him and everything. So I can't believe why he's done it."

"I think it's a very sad story. I think he said if his dad had been alive, he would never have done it. He was very close to his mum. His brother Eugene was a proper man and, saying that, I thought Frank was, too."

"All through his training and coaching career, I just didn't have a clue this was going to happen."

"The human mind is a strange thing. I am just shocked. I just haven't got a clue. I never, ever thought Frank Maloney, now known as Kellie Maloney, thought that way... to dress up, you know?"

"People are more accepting these days. At the end of the day, you don't know what's going through Frank's

mind, erm, Kellie's mind. I would never have had a bet Frank was like that."

At the Brompton Amateur Boxing club in Cross Street, Chatham, boss Veron Quarmy said: "It's a shame that he did that."

"I know Frank quite well, he's a lovely fella, but if that's what he wants, what can you do if he wants to do that?"

"We are all supporting him, all the clubs around Kent. You have just got to get on with life, that's what it's all about these days."

"It's 2014 and everything moves on – it's not like it was years ago when this would have been a shock to everybody. But these days, you get plenty of support, it's just life."

There are now rumours that Kellie, who has three daughters, will be signed up to appear on the 'jungle' TV series I'm A Celebrity, Get Me Out Of Here. It is also claimed that she was once against women boxing.

Lennox Lewis, meanwhile, said: "I was just as shocked as anyone at the news about my former promoter and my initial thought was that it was a wind-up."

"The great thing about life, and boxing, is that, day to day, you never know what to expect. This world we live in isn't always cut and dried or black and white, and coming from the boxing fraternity, I can only imagine what a difficult decision this must be for Kellie."

"However, having taken some time to read Kellie's statements, I understand better what she, and others in similar situations are going through."

"I think all people should be allowed to live their lives in a way that brings them harmony and inner peace."

"I respect Kellie's decision and say that if this is what brings about true happiness in her life, than so be it."

Kellie told the Sunday Mirror: "I was born in the wrong body and I have always known I was a woman. I can't keep living in the shadows, that is why I am doing what I am today."

place in race for the title



PODIUM CREDITS: Racer Shane 'Shakey' Byrne came second in the first race and third in the next two

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Pictures: ANDY KELLY

NTW



THOUGHT PROCESS: The Gillingham management team of Peter Taylor (left) and Andy Hessenthaler at Yeovil for Tuesday night's Capital One Cup tie

Gills drawn against Newcastle in cup

IT has been a fascinating first week of the football season for Gillingham.

Having taken a 2-0 lead at MK Dons on Saturday in their Sky Bet League One opener, they finally went down to a 4-2 defeat.

They established their lead through a Cody McDonald goal in the seventh minute and a Danny Kedwell penalty in the 29th.

However, a Kortney Hause own-goal just before half-time brought the home side back into the game and a horror spell for Gillingham of three MK Dons goals in six minutes turned the game on its head.

Will Adams, Kyle McFazdean were the men on target and Leon Legge the unfortunate scorer of an own-goal.

A crowd of 7,595 watched the match.

The potentially worse news, however, concerned injuries to McDonald and goalkeeper Stuart Nelson.

Taylor told the club website this week that he might have to bring in a loan signing to cover for Nelson: "Well, we've got to do that once we find out exactly how long it's going to be."

"If it's not going to be a long time we will take the chance in having one goalkeeper with a young one on the

bench, but if it's a longer one we've got to act."

"We are not 100 per cent. It could be one, two or three months, but it won't be less than that."

There is further uncertainty regarding McDonald, Taylor saying: "Again, we don't know. His knee has gone down, but his ankle is very swollen."

"When things like that happen it gives another player the opportunity and it's up to them to take it."

On Tuesday night, Gills were on the road again, this time making the trip to Somerset for their Capital One Cup first-round tie against Yeovil Town.

Goals from Brennan Dickenson and Aaron Morris were enough to seal a 2-1 Gills victory at Huish Park and their reward was a home draw against Premier League side Newcastle United in the next round.

Taylor said: "To get the draw was fantastic – it's lovely for our supporters to see a Premier League team as big as Newcastle United and I'm absolutely delighted for everybody."

"We were pleased with the win at Yeovil, but that's what makes it even better with all the boys talking about Newcastle."

Kent crush Sussex to make quarter-finals

KENT Spitfires secured a home quarter-final in the Royal London One-Day Cup with victory over Sussex Sharks at Canterbury on Wednesday.

Asked to bat, Kent made 299 all out from 49.5 overs, Daniel Bell-Drummond top-scoring with 83 and Sam Billings maintaining his good form with 51 not out from 39 balls.

The visitors never really threat-

ened to reach their target, despite a powerful batting line-up.

Two stoppages for rain brought Duckworth-Lewis into play, Sussex being set revised targets of 284 from 45 overs and then 243 from 35 overs.

Kent took wickets regularly, James Tredwell being pick of the bowlers with 4-27 from seven overs, and the home side won by 59 runs.

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